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Identical letters dated 22 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instruction from my Government, I have the honour to attach herewith a list detailing the numbers of civilians killed or injured, in addition to losses inflicted on infrastructure and public and private property, as a result of sniper shots and 107 mortar shells launched by terrorist armed groups against peaceful neighbourhoods in the city of Damascus and its suburbs, during the period from 3 May to 19 June 2017.

Date	*Location of impact*	*Number of mortar shells*	*Number of people killed or wounded*
3 May 2017	Assad suburb	16	1 killed
6 May 2017	Jaramana area	1	–
9 May 2017	Assad suburb	6	–
10 May 2017	Rawdah neighbourhood	1	–
	Tijarah neighbourhood	1	8 wounded
15 May 2017	Adra area, women's prison	8	2 killed
			10 wounded
	Adra area, Ibn Sina hospital	2	–
16 May 2017	Wafidin Camp	2	–
	Assad suburb	5	–
17 May 2017	Adra area, women's prison	5	1 killed
			3 wounded
22 May 2017	Assad suburb	2	–
	Hayat hospital area	1	3 wounded
28 May 2017	Harasta area, medical services department	10	–
	Assad suburb	5	–
29 May 2017	Ush al-Wurur area	1	–
30 May 2017	Harasta	5	1 wounded
13 June 2017	Wafidin Camp	3	–
	Adra area, women's prison	2	–
	Abbasiyin area	1	–

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Date	*Location of impact*	*Number of mortar shells*	*Number of people killed or wounded*
15 June 2017	Abbasiyin square	1	–
	Abbasiyin bus station	Sniper shots	1 killed
	Qassa' neighbourhood	2	–
	Rukn al-Din neighbourhood	2	–
19 June 2017	Kashkul area	7	2 wounded
	Kabbas area	2	3 wounded
	Dukhaniyah neighbourhood	12	1 killed
			4 wounded
	Al-Hal spice market	1	–
	Zablatani	3	–
Total			**6 killed** **34 wounded**

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Louay **Falouh**
Chargé d'affaires a.i

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Colombia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2261 (2016), by which the Council established the United Nations Mission in Colombia and requested that I report to the Council on the implementation of the mandate of the Mission every 90 days after the start of monitoring and verification activities. The report covers the activities of the Mission and related developments from 25 March to 23 June 2017 and provides initial recommendations for the establishment of a second special political mission, as requested by the President of the Security Council in a letter addressed to me dated 9 June 2017.

II. Major developments

2. The reporting period culminated with significant progress in the laying down of individual weapons of the members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) assembled in camps and of militia members carrying arms. On 16 June, the United Nations Mission in Colombia confirmed that it had received and stored 60 per cent of those weapons. The final phase, involving the laying down of the remainder of the weapons, began on 20 June. A ceremony marking the completion of this historic step was scheduled for 27 June.

3. The achievement of this major milestone in the peace process followed intensive negotiations between the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP to reach consensus on a road map of mutual commitments to enable the full laying down of weapons in camps and the collection of weapons in arms caches. A special session of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, held on 25 and 26 March in Cartagena, led to a first set of agreements and the gradual release into United Nations custody of around 1,000 weapons belonging to FARC-EP members called upon to participate in the implementation of a range of measures in the peace agreement. On 29 May, following two weeks of negotiations, the Commission agreed on a road map for the implementation of commitments stemming from the peace agreement. Its main features were made public in a communiqué issued the same day, in which FARC-EP committed to hand over all of the weapons of its members in the camps as well as those of militias to the Mission between 1 and 20 June, thereby allowing for their transition to legality. The Mission will then extract the containers with weapons collected from the camps by 1 August. In collaboration with FARC-EP and the

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Colombian security forces, the Mission will conduct operations to extract arms and destroy explosives located in arms caches until 1 September. Any arms caches remaining after that date will be disposed of by the Government in collaboration with FARC-EP. In the communiqué, the transformation of zones and points where FARC-EP is assembled for the purpose of the laying down of arms into "territorial spaces for training and reintegration" after 1 August was also announced.

4. The Government committed to the implementation of provisions of the peace agreement that ensure the legal, physical and socioeconomic security of FARC-EP. Legal measures include the effective application of amnesties or conditional release for all incarcerated FARC-EP members; the lifting of arrest warrants for all FARC-EP members after the handover of their arms, pending the resolution of their legal situation through amnesties or decisions of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace; and the issuance of a presidential decree to apply amnesties to all FARC-EP members having laid down weapons and having been certified by the High Commissioner for Peace.

5. The Government committed to enhance physical security through the issuance of decrees to create a comprehensive security system for the exercise of politics by FARC-EP and a special investigation unit within the Office of the Attorney General and an elite police unit to combat criminal organizations in areas in which FARC-EP formerly had a presence. The Government also committed to initiate pilot projects for the dismantling of criminal groups in Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca Department) and Tumaco (Nariño Department), and to launch the training of FARC-EP members designated to become part of a National Protection Unit to protect FARC-EP members.

6. Socioeconomic security during the reintegration phase would be promoted through basic stipends and economic support to FARC-EP members reintegrating into society. To that end, the Government issued decrees on socioeconomic reintegration and the reform of the Colombian agency for the reintegration of persons and armed groups. A working group has been established to determine over a 60-day period the design of viable productive projects.

7. With regard to international verification, the parties agreed to request, to the Secretary-General and the Security Council, that the tasks of the second United Nations political mission provided for in the peace agreement be brought forward, to begin before 10 July. Recommendations in that regard are included in section V of the present report. The parties also agreed to activate the international component of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, whose composition and functions are specified in paragraph 10 below, by 30 June.

8. The visit of the Security Council to Colombia from 3 to 5 May underscored the high level of international engagement with and commitment to the peace process. The visit also provided an opportunity for political parties in Congress and civil society to express their hopes and concerns with respect to peace implementation and their expectations regarding the support of the international community.

Key implementation bodies

Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement

9. The agreement reached on 29 May in the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement will enhance the role played by implementation bodies, including the National

Reintegration Council and the National Commission on Security Guarantees, as the priorities outlined therein are at the core of their mandated tasks. The Commission met frequently throughout the reporting period to consider peace-related legislation prior to its submission to Congress and to resolve differences between the parties.

10. On 30 March, the international component of the Commission was formally established in the city of Cali in the presence of the former President of Uruguay, José Mujica, and the former President of Spain, Felipe González, who were designated as "notables" with verification responsibilities. With the support of a technical secretariat, the two former leaders are expected to produce reports, make pronouncements on the implementation of the agreement and offer recommendations to resolve impasses, as needed. Their terms of reference exclude issues under the purview of the United Nations Mission.

11. On 11 April, the Commission established a special entity to ensure that a gender perspective, including on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex issues, is mainstreamed in the implementation of the peace agreement. This entity will make recommendations to the Commission, follow up on the implementation of gender provisions in the agreement and establish a permanent dialogue between women's groups and peace-related bodies. The Commission is currently reviewing applications to appoint the seven women who will serve in their personal capacity but who have been nominated by their respective organizations.

National Reintegration Council

12. The National Reintegration Council, comprising two government and two FARC-EP members, has met approximately 30 times since its creation in late December 2016. Its main tasks are to define a reintegration strategy and to implement short-term measures during the first phase of concentration of FARC-EP members in the zones and points. Although those are its broader aims, the Council's efforts during the period were focused mainly on three specific issues: the reintegration of children in FARC-EP ranks; the release of incarcerated FARC-EP members who have been pardoned; and the preparation of a socioeconomic and education census of FARC-EP members.

13. In line with the separation protocol established for the reintegration of children in May 2016, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported the separation of 86 children from guerrilla ranks as at 12 May. Reception of these minors was supported by the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Children's Fund.

14. With regard to pardoned former combatants, the National Reintegration Council arranged for temporary housing centres provided by international donors and the Catholic Church, although the goal of FARC-EP is for them to move towards zones and points when logistical conditions allow.

15. A socioeconomic census of FARC-EP members has been conducted by the National University of Colombia since the beginning of May; its results are expected by the end of June. The census aims to gather information from former combatants concentrated in zones and points or currently serving sentences in prison with respect to their needs and aspirations, level of education, professional background, family situation and health. The results will be delivered to the National Reintegration Council to shape reintegration policies.

16. The Colombian Agency for Reintegration, transformed by presidential decree into the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, will include a specific programme on the socioeconomic reintegration of FARC-EP members and will coordinate government institutions and NGOs.

17. Other positive developments include the approval of a decree establishing a cooperative organization (Ecomun) for FARC-EP projects and financial disbursements for the first phase of reintegration, as foreseen in the peace agreement. On 5 June, in accordance with the road map of 29 May, the National Reintegration Council established a working group that was given 60 days to formulate economic projects to be implemented by communities or other organizations.

National Commission on Security Guarantees

18. The bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities between the Government and FARC-EP held during the reporting period; there was just one serious incident with no casualties reported as a result of confrontation between the parties. Nonetheless, concerns persisted regarding the security situation in the areas most affected by the conflict and the activities of armed groups and organizations termed the successors of the demobilized paramilitary groups. Attacks against community leaders and human rights defenders continued. From 1 January to 23 May 2017, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights verified the killing of 17 human rights defenders who had also been social leaders. Fifteen additional cases remained under review. Colombian human rights organizations reported higher numbers. In addition, during the reporting period, three FARC-EP members were killed, as well as 10 of their relatives, reportedly at the hands of armed groups including FARC-EP dissidents. The most recent case involved an amnestied FARC-EP member reported to have been killed in Caquetá Department on 19 June. Rural areas formerly under FARC-EP control and where the illicit economy has proliferated present a higher risk for human rights defenders and social leaders, posing a challenge for the State in its efforts to increase security.

19. The attacks against social and community leaders as well as FARC-EP members and their families have heightened concerns about their security during the reintegration phase while underscoring the importance of the provision of security guarantees and the establishment of measures to prevent such violence. In this regard, the work of the National Commission on Security Guarantees, led by the President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, has gained further relevance for peace consolidation.

20. On 22 May, the Commission reviewed the legislation required to strengthen security mechanisms in compliance with the peace agreement, and decided that some provisions could be implemented by decree. That decision was made effective by the issuance, in the lead-up to the road map of 29 May, of a series of presidential decrees on peace implementation that included security-related measures, as outlined in paragraph 5 above.

Colombia in Peace Fund

21. On 27 April, the President announced the creation of the Colombia in Peace Fund, which is expected to coordinate funds to address post-conflict priorities. The Government indicated that the fund would have an initial allocation of 750 billion Colombian pesos (around $247 million). It is expected to consolidate funds from the national budget, royalty revenue, private donations and contributions from the international community, including the multi-donor trust fund, which has mobilized $58 million to date.

Legislative and institutional implementation of the peace agreement

Major legislation approved under "fast track" procedures

22. The Colombian Congress continued to consider and approve peace-related legislation under the "fast track" procedures allowing for expedited congressional approval. Towards the end of the period, the Government obtained a six-month extension of the procedures, which had been set to expire on 1 June. Key legislation included:

(a) A law on the creation of a Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition, which establishes a Special Jurisdiction for Peace to address crimes committed during the armed conflict. Congress is expected to approve a statutory law that will effectively activate the functioning of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace;

(b) A law on the statute of the opposition, which was called for in the peace agreement and had remained pending since the approval of the Constitution of Colombia of 1991. The statute provides for additional financing for political parties and movements declaring themselves in opposition to the Government; ensures a right of public reply through the media for the opposition to respond to major public pronouncements of the Government; and allows the opposition to set the agenda for legislative debates five times in each legislative period;

(c) A law providing guarantees for the implementation of the peace agreement through a transitional article in the Constitution specifying that aspects of the peace agreement relating to norms of international humanitarian law or fundamental rights will be obligatory parameters for the interpretation of norms and laws to implement the peace agreement. The legislation notes that all State institutions and authorities are to comply in good faith with the provisions set out in the peace agreement;

(d) A law on the political reintegration of FARC-EP, outlining modalities for the transition of FARC-EP into a political party or movement, including its financing. It establishes that the political party or movement to be created by FARC-EP will have a minimum of five seats in both the Senate and House of Representatives during the next two electoral periods (2018-2022 and 2022-2026).

Major presidential decrees relating to peace implementation

23. The President made use of his extraordinary powers, under fast-track procedures, to issue decrees relating to peace implementation. In the context of the road map agreed on 29 May, the President issued 22 decrees relating to, inter alia, the social and economic development of areas affected by the conflict, the socioeconomic reintegration of FARC-EP members, the reintegration of children from FARC-EP, the establishment of a special investigation unit in the Office of the Attorney General, the system of security for the exercise of politics and a national programme for crop substitution.

24. Previously, the President had issued a number of peace-related decrees, including decrees establishing the selection committee for the justices and other officials of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition; the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition; and the unit for the search of persons considered to be disappeared in the context of and owing to the armed conflict. The selection committee is in the process of considering members who will serve as officials in the justice component foreseen in the peace agreement. It has confirmed Néstor Raúl Correa as the Executive Secretary of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. The President also issued

a decree on a special judicial mechanism for members of the armed forces and a decree to facilitate the implementation of amnesty provisions for FARC-EP members.

Review of legislation by the Constitutional Court

25. Legislation already approved under "fast track" provisions remains subject to review by the Constitutional Court, which has found three peace-related presidential decrees unconstitutional on technical grounds. On 17 May, the Court invalidated a decree providing for the expansion of the National Protection Unit to incorporate some 1,200 FARC-EP members, as envisioned in the peace agreement, for reasons relating to the Unit's budget expected to be rectified shortly. The Court argued that the budget for the Unit should have been expanded prior to the decree. More significantly, on the same day, the Court issued a ruling invalidating aspects of the "fast track" procedures for congressional approval of peace-related legislation. As a result, such legislation can be debated line by line rather than only in its entirety, and proposed amendments would no longer be limited to those having prior approval of the Government after its determining of their consistency with the peace agreement.

26. Both decisions generated significant concern on the part of FARC-EP and the supporters of the peace process with regard to the role of the Constitutional Court in peace implementation and the legal guarantees provided by the peace agreement. In an effort to mitigate those concerns, political parties supporting the peace process pledged publicly to vote in favour of peace-related legislation. Congressional approval at the level of peace committees immediately after the Court's ruling suggested that Congress is still able to expedite the approval of legislation.

27. The court announced in mid-May that it would initiate a review of the amnesty law in conjunction with its review of the broader law on the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition. The reviews will be watched closely for their potential impact on the peace process.

Negotiations with other armed groups

28. The first round of talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN), launched on 7 February, was concluded on 6 April in Quito. Against a backdrop of continued military confrontation, in an effort to de-escalate the violence, the Government and ELN announced a humanitarian demining pilot project as well as their intention to reach agreements in conformity with international humanitarian law. The ELN central command and the FARC-EP secretariat met in May in Havana in an encounter organized by the Government of Colombia. In a joint statement issued on 11 May, both groups underscored their common goal of reaching peace, through different yet complementary paths. A second round of talks was launched on 16 May with a focus on de-escalating violence, protecting the civilian population and promoting civil society participation in peace talks.

III. Mission tasks

29. The Mission serves as coordinator of the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, responsible for overseeing implementation of the ceasefire protocol agreed by the parties in the peace agreement. The achievement of near full deployment to its local headquarters has allowed the Mechanism to increase significantly its monitoring activities as well as its engagement with local communities and civil society representatives. Amid logistical delays and missed deadlines along the timeline established in the peace agreement, the Mechanism

proved to be effective in maintaining confidence and addressing incidents relating to the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities agreement and protocols. That only nine serious violations of the ceasefire have been registered since the beginning of the Mechanism's operations in November 2016 is indicative of the parties' commitment to respect their obligations.

A. Activities relating to the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities and coordination of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism

30. The Mission, as coordinator of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, focused on its monitoring responsibilities in zones and points and the surrounding security area, where the armed forces are deployed. The parties requested that the Mechanism assess progress with regard to the establishment of FARC-EP camps, logistical support and the provision of health care. The Mechanism also supported the start of reintegration activities led by private and public entities in zones and points. Such activities included training provided by the national training service, the issuance of identity documents by the national registry, the census conducted by the National University and activities undertaken by universities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among others. The Mechanism coordinated with ICRC the movement of children from FARC-EP camps to reintegration centres. The operations are led by ICRC and the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights. Lastly, the Mechanism conducted outreach activities with local communities, civil society and local and regional authorities and hosted the visits of international dignitaries.

Verification of incidents

31. Since the start of its activities, the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism has received 284 requests for the verification of incidents. Of that total, 83 fell outside the mandate of the Mechanism. Of the verified incidents, 21 were failures to comply with the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities protocols owing to misinterpretation or a lack of coordination; 30 were minor violations; and 9 were grave violations (the incident of 13 November 2016 counts as 2 violations). Most violations related to movements of FARC-EP members as well as incursions by the public security forces into the security areas of zones and points or irregularities in the security controls to access zones and points. Three serious violations were reported during the reporting period: an overflight of a zone by a government helicopter; a case of attempted sexual abuse of minors by a FARC-EP member in a camp; and an incursion into a zone by a group of four soldiers, armed and in civilian clothes. One of the soldiers was wounded by gunfire from the guards of the FARC-EP camp.

Status of construction of Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army camps in zones and points

32. In a joint communiqué with FARC-EP issued on 26 March, the Government committed to complete infrastructure in zones and points, including FARC-EP camps, by the end of April. However, the construction of infrastructure continued to face significant delays. As at the end of May, the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism had assessed that 20 camps were nearly complete in terms of basic infrastructure. Four camps were more than halfway completed and four were less than halfway completed (there are two camps in one of the zones). Delays were due to, among other factors, adverse weather conditions, delays in payments to contractors and some roadblocks owing to protests in the vicinity of zones and points, which prevented the delivery of construction materials.

Verification of installations housing Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army inmates

33. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism is responsible for verifying the suitability of installations in the zone of La Guajira (Meta Department) before the Government can transfer FARC-EP inmates who have served less than five years of their sentences for grave crimes and are therefore subjected to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. An initial certification on 9 March allowed the transfer of the first group of 24 inmates on 24 April. Further transfers of inmates were conducted in May and June. As at 15 June, 229 FARC-EP inmates had been transferred to the zone.

Provision of logistics and medical services

34. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism has been monitoring on a weekly basis the provision of supplies to FARC-EP camps (including food, clothing, hygiene kits, welfare equipment and cleaning supplies). Improvements observed during the previous reporting period have been maintained, especially in food supplies. Following the parties' joint communiqué of 26 March, there was a notable improvement in the sourcing of food from local suppliers — a recurrent demand of FARC-EP and communities who see the benefit to the local economy. Although the supply of clothing kits began in May, there have been problems in arranging the reception of deliveries in some areas.

35. Significant problems arose with regard to the water supply at some of the local headquarters of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, owing to contamination by bacteria and seepage from septic tanks. The Mission has requested the National Institute of Health of Colombia to analyse the drinking water in those locations and has requested Fondo Paz (the government agency in charge of local contracts) to urgently address the problem. Immediate remedial action was taken through the distribution of bottled water, while structural solutions are expected to be in place by the end of June.

36. There have been cases of malaria and dengue in certain zones among members of the Colombian armed forces and FARC-EP, particularly in the zone of Vidrí, Vigía del Fuerte (Antioquia Department), and El Gallo, Tierralta (Córdoba Department). Requests have been made for the supply of medication.

37. In April, the Government deployed medical teams and ambulances to zones and points; these also serve local communities. This has significantly improved living conditions. By 26 May, doctors and nurses had been deployed to all zones and points, ensuring the presence of medical personnel at all locations. Ambulances were deployed to 25 zones and points, with the exception of Vidrí, Vigía del Fuerte (Antioquia Department), and El Gallo, Tierralta (Córdoba Department), which require riverine transport that has been requested but not delivered owing to contractual problems. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism called upon the authorities to expedite the lifting of arrest warrants for FARC-EP members needing to leave zones and points to receive medical care.

38. The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, through regular public statements, has kept the public informed on progress regarding the Government-provided logistics and medical care, as well as on the verification of incidents.

Security challenges

39. The work of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism continued to be affected by security concerns at the local level. At times, operations had to be suspended in areas such as Caño Indio, Tibú (Norte de Santander Department),

because of the actions of armed groups such as the Popular Liberation Army and ELN. The presence of organized armed groups and actions against them by the public security forces also affected the security context. Operations were suspended intermittently in La Variante, Tumaco (Nariño Department), following demonstrations by coca growers, who set up roadblocks. Similar protests affected activities in other locations. Public security forces discovered and destroyed explosive devices in the vicinity of a number of zones and points. Dissident FARC-EP fronts, particularly in the Departments of Caquetá, Guaviare and Meta, posed an additional concern for the Mechanism's operations, including the operations of the United Nations country team, particularly following the detention of personnel of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) by one of the dissident fronts in the Guaviare region (see para. 68 below).While remaining modest in relation to the overall size of FARC-EP, a steady increase in the number of individual desertions was reported during the reporting period, bringing the total registered by the Mission to 276 since 1 December 2016. In addition, 45 FARC-EP members have been expelled from the group since that date and 45 have engaged in the individual demobilization programme offered by the State.

Liaison and outreach

40. The communications strategy of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism has continued at the local, regional and national levels, providing information on the Mechanism's activities, supporting visits of international, national and local actors seeking to learn about the ceasefire process and promoting better understanding about the peace process more generally. The Mechanism liaised on a regular basis with civil society actors, particularly local authorities, governors, local leaders, academics and institutional actors. In addition, the Mechanism provided information to local communities, NGOs, political groups and other actors on the functioning of the zones and points. The Mechanism does not restrict access to zones and points, which may be visited by unarmed civilians, provided that meetings are conducted in reception areas and not within FARC-EP camps, in accordance with the peace agreement protocols.

Engagement with women's groups and gender approach

41. The Mission continued to engage closely with women's groups to exchange information on the gender dimension of peace implementation and the involvement of such groups in this process. It facilitated their interaction with the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, including the participation of female FARC-EP members in meetings. Women's groups also support the Mission in identifying possible situations of gender-based violence and in developing prevention and protection mechanisms.

42. The Mission supported the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in preparing a tripartite gender directive that highlights the inclusion and participation of women within the Mechanism. It also defines the tasks to be carried out by the gender focal points at the national, regional and local levels, including understanding the local context with a gender perspective, receiving complaints on sexual violence, activating protection routes for victims and capacity-building for members of the Mechanism.

B. Activities related to the laying down of arms

Registration and collection of arms

43. The peace agreement established an ambitious timeline for the ceasefire and the process for the laying down of arms, with which the parties have been at pains to comply. Logistical delays and a drawn out implementation of provisions of the peace agreement resulted in the start of key activities relating to the process for the laying down of arms being deferred. The Mission identified and registered 7,132 FARC-EP arms in zones and points from 1 to 25 March and initiated the collection of arms of FARC-EP members serving as observers in the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism. During the course of the session of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement held in Cartagena on 25 and 26 March, FARC-EP agreed to hand over the arms of its members involved in peace-related activities, numbering about 1,000.

44. Throughout the reporting period, the Mission has been ready to receive and store the arms of FARC-EP members in zones and points, initially in reinforced metal boxes. As the construction of FARC-EP camps progressed, the Mission installed containers which to date number 44 in 22 zones and points. Four zones and points required the construction of arms storage facilities, as containers could not be transported to those locations.

45. Following the agreement of 29 May on the road map and in particular the new and compressed timeline for the handover of weapons in FARC-EP camps, the Mission, FARC-EP and the Government carried out intensive preparations for the storage of weapons of combatants in camps and militia members in three stages: 30 per cent on 7 June, 30 per cent on 14 June and the remainder on 20 June. It was agreed that militia members would join zones and points to register and initiate their transition towards legality. Those militias carrying arms would hand over their weapons to the Mission and receive the corresponding certification. FARC-EP informed the Mission that the arms of most militia members were located in weapons caches.

46. On 16 June, the Mission confirmed that it had stored 60 per cent of the weapons of FARC-EP members in United Nations containers. On 20 June, it was announced that the final phase, involving the handing in of the last tranche of weapons, had begun in the zones and points. A ceremony was scheduled for 27 June to mark the historic completion of the process.

Certification of the laying down of arms

47. At the request of the parties, the Mission is providing certificates to individual FARC-EP members who have handed over their arms to facilitate their transition to legality, on the basis of lists of FARC-EP members provided by the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace. By the end of May, the Office had provided the Mission with a list of 6,990 FARC-EP members located in zones and points and FARC-EP secretariat members, as well as those involved in the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism at the regional and national levels. In addition, on 8 June, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace provided the Mission with a list of 2,800 militia members.

Disposal of arms caches

48. FARC-EP faced delays in obtaining information on the number and location of caches. It was not until late in April that FARC-EP informed the Mission that there

were 949 arms caches throughout the country. Their large number and remote location posed a significant challenge, as operations to dismantle caches are complex and involve close coordination with FARC-EP and the Government's public security forces.

49. According to the road map of 29 May, the United Nations Mission in Colombia is to verify the destruction of arms caches by FARC-EP until 1 September 2017, after which date the Government will assume this responsibility, with the assistance of FARC-EP. Until that time, efforts will be made to verify the disposal of as many caches as possible. The Mission is also planning for the neutralization of weapons and their transport out of zones and points.

50. To date, the Mission has conducted six operations to verify the disposal of caches. On the basis of information provided by FARC-EP, and in coordination with the Government's security forces, the Mission has been planning for 40 more, of which 24 were ready to launch as at 12 June, pending only FARC-EP confirmation and the logistical and security support of the public security forces. Each operation could cover several caches.

51. Security is a key factor in operations concerning caches, as some are located in areas where armed groups are operating. Logistics and weather conditions can pose an additional challenge, given their remote location and difficult terrain, and air transport is often required. The Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat supports these activities by providing advice through security risk assessments for each area, as well as with a physical presence during the operations, ensuring compliance with all standard United Nations security measures.

C. Activities related to the liaison and coordination functions

52. The Mission continued to strengthen its working relationships with local government and indigenous authorities, community action boards (*Juntas de Acción Comunal*) and civil society groups at large. It also broadened its engagement with sectors opposed to, or sceptical of, the peace process, ensuring frequent briefings on the activities of the Mission and the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism while collecting their views on the overall mandate. In general, communities continue to perceive the Mission as a stabilizing factor and support the peace process. However, local frustration is growing with the lack of public economic and social investment. Questions remained over the shape and scope of community-based plans for the reintegration of former combatants into communities.

53. At the national level, the Mission has sought to enhance engagement with a broad array of actors — among them political and social leaders, private sector representatives, parliamentarians, religious organizations and think tanks — in addition to regular meetings with civil society organizations, including ethnic and women's groups.

54. The Mission remained closely engaged with women's groups to exchange information on the gender dimension of peace implementation and the involvement of women's groups in this process.

55. Cooperation with United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes in Colombia has continued, not only at the national level, but also at local levels through the local coordination teams. The Mission has benefited from the analysis of specialized agencies in relation to thematic aspects of the peace agreement and the stabilization activities of the United Nations country team at the local level. United Nations system partners have continued to support the Mission in ongoing training for staff.

56. As noted in my previous report (S/2017/252), the Mission has cooperated with the United Nations country team and the Colombian Agency for Territorial Renovation in participatory community assessments to inform the design of development projects in areas surrounding zones and points. Around $13 million relating to ongoing programming from the United Nations system and its partners has been reprogrammed to support collective reparation to victims, protection and prevention of recruitment by armed groups, support for small-scale economic initiatives and support for women affected by gender-based violence, including in municipalities hosting zones and points. Other requests for funding are being discussed with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund of the United Nations Development Programme and the Peacebuilding Fund. The above-mentioned assessments are part of the rapid response efforts provided in the Government's stabilization plan, which includes investments in small infrastructure projects, road improvements and crop substitution. Rapid implementation of the projects is desirable.

IV. Mission set-up and structures

57. The Mission achieved full operational capacity during the reporting period, both at its national headquarters in Bogotá and in the eight regional offices and one subregional office. The Medellín regional office operated from temporary premises until 28 April.

A. International observers

58. As at 12 June, the Mission has deployed 448 international observers from 19 countries, under its authorized ceiling of 450, 58 of whom (13 per cent) are women.

59. During the reporting period, the local headquarters of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism were expanded, allowing for progress in the deployment of the full personnel capacity of United Nations observers. As at 17 May, the Mechanism operated from local headquarters in each of the 26 zones and points. The last three local headquarters to be established were set up in mid-May in Agua Bonita, Montañita (Caquetá Department); Caño Indio, Tibú (Norte de Santander Department); and El Gallo, Tierra Alta (Córdoba Department). The Government and FARC-EP components have yet to deploy some 30 per cent of their respective personnel, pending completion of the expansion of local headquarters capacity.

B. Coordination and substantive

60. The Mission continued to deploy substantive-section observers to local sites, with a major push taking place during the reporting period as a result of advances in the expansion and facilities of local headquarters. Eighty-two per cent of substantive-section staff in the Mission are now operating at their designated locations and as part of local tripartite teams. Efforts to deploy the remaining substantive staff to the field are ongoing and depend on security conditions in some locations and outstanding logistical requirements. The Mission undertook a determined effort to recruit women to fill substantive-section positions to be deployed to local sites, as a means of promoting gender balance among observers. Of the 23 incumbents of Professional posts at the local level and 49 United Nations Volunteers, 50 are women (69 per cent). All local substantive teams of three have been carefully assigned to ensure that they include two female and one male staff.

C. Mission support

61. In the light of the support originally envisaged to be provided by the Government of Colombia, the mission support structure was based on the principles of a light footprint, outsourcing and the leveraging of the existing capacities of a regional mission for administrative support. The Mission is working to finalize a number of letters of assist and memorandums of understanding with the Government of Colombia to operationalize the necessary support for the Mission and the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism specifically, including an agreement on cost-sharing as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2307 (2016).

62. The Mission has recruited a total of 108 international civilian staff, or 92 per cent of the authorized strength, 65 national staff out of an authorized strength of 100, and 53 United Nations Volunteers, equivalent to 89 per cent of the authorized strength. As of May 2017, 48.2 per cent of the civilian staff of the United Nations Mission in Colombia were women.

63. A mission support plan was developed to facilitate the deployment and maintenance of the Mission and the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism by ensuring smooth and uninterrupted logistical and administrative support to international observers and staff in all eight regional offices and 26 zones and points. The support includes follow-up to the timely implementation of contractual arrangements entered into by Fondo Paz and the coordination of logistical resupply movements.

64. The headquarters in Bogotá, the eight regional offices and the 26 zones and points were provided with Internet connectivity and communications infrastructure within two months of the Government's request, dated 19 January 2017, that the Mission take full responsibility for the provision of these services to all components of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism. The Mission has put in place contractual arrangements to provide sufficient Internet and telephone connectivity to ensure compliance with minimum operating security standards for operations in the zones and points, as well as portable equipment for Internet, radio, telephone and Global Positioning System support to teams deployed to carry out arms cache operations.

65. The Mission has concluded a letter-of-assist arrangement with the Government of Colombia for the provision of medical services Mission-wide to all personnel, as appropriate, including the deployment of combat nurses, ambulances, medical kits, pharmaceuticals and evacuation capacity.

66. The two helicopters that were deployed to the Mission area for operational support undertook regular and special flights, logistics supply flights and related movements. This capability will continue to be essential, in particular given the requirements for the Mission to transport stored weapons and ammunition from the zones and points to more central locations, to deploy personnel to remote areas to recover material from arms caches and, in general, to support priority tasks related to the second mandate.

D. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

67. The Government of Colombia, specifically the National Police, continues to provide security to the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism and the Mission. The Department of Safety and Security provides ongoing leadership and operational support and advice on the policies and procedures of the United Nations security

management system, in close cooperation and liaison with the Colombian authorities.

68. On 3 May, members of a dissident FARC-EP front detained a UNODC employee who was conducting activities in the municipality of Miraflores (Guaviare Department). Despite initial indications that the UNODC employee would be released, he remains retained. A United Nations hostage incident management team was immediately established under the overall leadership of the designated official for security in Colombia. In the light of security concerns, non-essential, unescorted missions in areas of Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Guaviare and Meta Departments were suspended. This first instance of hostage-taking of United Nations personnel in the country has altered the threat environment for United Nations operations in the foreseeable future.

69. The security risk assessment developed for the Mission predicts that residual risk levels in relation to most identified threats (kidnapping, attack by spoilers, crossfire and violent demonstrations) vary between low and substantial. From a security management perspective, the activities planned for the Mission are viable insofar as the relevant risk management measures are fully implemented. The threat of landmines continues to pose considerable risk in some areas.

E. Conduct and discipline

70. Efforts continued to ensure that the behaviour of United Nations personnel abides by United Nations rules and regulations as well as Colombian law, with a particular focus on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Mission issued a directive on conduct and discipline that outlines the expectations, procedural aspects and consequences of misconduct. In addition, the Mission disseminated guidelines that specifically prohibit any relation other than professional of Mission staff with the members of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism as well as with local communities, particularly in the context of the 26 local headquarters in zones and points. The Conduct and Discipline Team conducted induction training for new staff, as well as regular presentations in regional offices and monthly conferences for Heads of Offices, civilian staff and observers in Bogotá. Furthermore, the Conduct and Discipline Team, in cooperation with the Mission's Public Information Office, included a link on the Mission's web page providing information on United Nations standards of conduct and reporting mechanisms.

71. During the reporting period, two allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were reported to the Mission. Investigations and the need for further action regarding both allegations are under review at United Nations Headquarters.

V. Request for the establishment of a second mission and recommendations

72. The peace agreement provided for a second United Nations mission to be established upon completion of the mandate of the current Mission, to focus on the reintegration of FARC-EP and the implementation of personal and collective security and protection measures. As part of the road map of 29 May, the parties agreed to request that the envisioned verification tasks of the second mandate be brought forward to coincide with the start of reintegration activities in July 2017. In keeping with this agreement, the President of Colombia, in identical letters dated 5 June 2017 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me, requested the establishment of the second mission before 10 July 2017 (see S/2017/481,

annex). On 9 June, the President of the Security Council asked me to provide the Council with initial recommendations on how such a request could be met.

73. In his letter, the President of Colombia indicated that, in accordance with item 6.3.3 of the peace agreement, the second mission would verify the political and socioeconomic reintegration of FARC-EP; the implementation of personal and collective security and protection measures; and the implementation of security and protection programmes for communities and organizations in conflict-affected areas. The road map of 29 May provides for the start of preparations for the reintegration process on 1 June. It also provides that by 1 August, the local zones and points would convert into territorial spaces for training and reintegration. Furthermore, it states that the first United Nations Mission will continue until the end of its mandate on 26 September. Its tasks, according to revised timelines in the road map, include the verification of the laying down of individual arms by 20 June and of the disposal of arms caches until 1 September.

74. Successful implementation of the reintegration phase will be crucial to consolidate peace in Colombia. The second mission can be an important factor to build trust in the process and support the parties in their efforts to meet their mutual commitments. I therefore recommend that the Security Council consider the request favourably. In order to respond to the expectations of the parties, and taking into account both the remaining responsibilities for the completion of the current mandate and the existing capacities of the Mission on the ground, I wish to inform the Council of the following:

(a) Until such time as the second mission can be fully established upon completion of the current mandate on 26 September, the current Mission is in a position, if so authorized by the Council, to initiate some tasks of the second mandate on a provisional basis in order to satisfy the request of the parties to move forward the verification tasks to coincide with the start of the reintegration process. The Mission can do so, within available resources and from its current 8 regional and 26 local headquarters, pending further assessment to determine the requirements for full implementation;

(b) The initial verification of aspects related to the socioeconomic and political reintegration of FARC-EP members can be undertaken by United Nations Mission personnel currently in place who have already been monitoring a number of activities other than the ceasefire and the laying down of weapons, such as camp construction and the provision of logistical support and health care to FARC-EP;

(c) With regard to security guarantees for FARC-EP members following the laying down of weapons, and more broadly for communities in the areas most affected by the conflict, the geographical scope of verification is larger than the current zones and points where the FARC-EP members are assembled. Such verification will involve observation of the security situation in conflict areas and the sharing of information and recommendations with competent bodies. Initial verification in this case will require the reassignment of some local headquarters personnel. The Mission has determined that, if authorized by the Council, it is in a position to assign a small number of local headquarters staff to the verification of security guarantees in July. After 1 August, given that the transition of the zones and points to territorial spaces for training and reintegration will reduce the extent of verification tasks required under the current mandate, the Mission would be able to allocate additional resources to the verification of security guarantees;

(d) Our ability to meet the request of the parties would be facilitated should the Council authorize preparations for the second mission to be initiated immediately, as it did in paragraph 3 of resolution 2261 (2016) in relation to the current Mission. With this authority, I would undertake an integrated planning

process for the second mission and submit a report to the Council by August, informed by practical experience on the ground and including detailed proposals regarding the Mission's functions, size, structure and operational aspects.

VI. Observations

75. Colombia's peace process has taken important strides forward on the strength of the will of the parties to implement the peace agreement and the support of many in Colombian society who share their determination. After waging armed struggle against the Colombian State for more than five decades, FARC-EP is honouring its commitment under the peace agreement to lay down its arms. This is a historic achievement that is not diminished because of temporary delays in the finalization of the laying down of arms process. I commend the parties for their determination to persevere in the implementation of the terms of the peace agreement in the face of obstacles over the past months and am confident that they will complete the process and abide by their commitments.

76. For now, it is particularly important that the parties continue to work together to carry over the momentum in two key areas: completing the process of the laying down of arms and initiating on solid ground the reintegration phase. This will require thorough implementation of the road map of 29 May, which envisages that the laying down of arms process is accompanied by a corresponding delivery on the part of State authorities of the necessary legal, security and socioeconomic guarantees provided for under the peace agreement.

77. As the phase of the laying down of arms comes to an end, the reintegration of FARC-EP into society faces particular complexities. The presence of the illegal economy, the risks posed by groups outside the peace process, violence against social leaders and recent killings of FARC-EP members and their families all underscore the delicate nature of the process ahead. In this context, there have been welcome acknowledgements of the need to address security concerns that have emerged with force even before the completion of the laying down of arms. There could be no greater message of reassurance to former combatants and communities at large than an effective effort by the Government with respect to its security commitments. The parties' request for the United Nations to initiate without delay the verification of the economic, social and political reincorporation of FARC-EP and security guarantees for its members and community leaders is a sign of the determination to address the challenges ahead.

78. I continue to be concerned about the levels of polarization around the implementation of the peace agreement, which risks increasing in the context of the coming electoral period. The laying down of arms sends a clear signal of the intention of the parties to comply with the commitments they made to the people of Colombia and the international community in the peace agreement they signed in November 2016. Adherence to the ceasefire has saved many lives. I share the hope that, as the peace process delivers concrete dividends on the ground, its benefits will be appreciated by a population that universally expresses a desire for peace. Rather than being a divisive issue, peace can and must become a unifying national objective.

79. The period ahead will also demand a unified effort by all in the international community, including the United Nations, who have been invited to play a supporting role in the verification or the implementation of the peace agreement. The role of the guarantors, Cuba and Norway, remains important in accompanying the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, as is the new role to be exercised by the

former President of Uruguay, José Mujica, and the former President of Spain, Felipe González, as "notables" heading the international verification component.

80. I commend Member States and the Security Council in particular for their unfailing support for the peace process and the Mission. I thank once again the observer-contributing countries for their commitment to the Mission and their flexibility in responding to its needs.

81. Lastly, I would like to express my continued appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, under the leadership of my Special Representative, Jean Arnault, to implement the mandate entrusted to the Organization. Its presence on the ground has no doubt contributed to the success of the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities, as well as the progress in the laying down of arms. I commend the Mission's continued close cooperation with the United Nations country team, which has its own important roles to play in supporting implementation of Colombia's peace agreement. I thank the parties for their crucial cooperation with the Mission and for the continued faith they exhibit in the United Nations by entrusting to our Organization new and critical responsibilities.

United Nations S/2017/540

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 June 2017
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 23 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on observance of the ceasefire regime in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 21-23 June 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) P. **Ilichev**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 23 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on observance of the ceasefire regime (21 June 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported nine incidents of gunfire: seven in Damascus governorate and two in Hama governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported eight violations in the following governorates: five in Damascus, one in Dar'a, one in Hama and one in Idlib.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out seven humanitarian operations: in Aleppo city, delivering 2.55 tons of food products to the local population; and in Homs governorate, delivering 2 tons of food parcels to the local population.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo was 4.55 tons.

Humanitarian assistance was provided to 1,428 people.

In total, 1,376 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

During humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours, Russian field medics have provided medical assistance to 236 people.

One United Nations humanitarian operation was carried out: the Russian airline Abakan Air parachuted a total of 19.8 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products) near to the city of Dayr-al-Zawr.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, 100 ceasefire agreements have been signed in Aleppo governorate.

The size of the population living in the areas that signed the agreements was over 195,000 people.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,817.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 223.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (22 June 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported seven incidents of gunfire: six in Damascus governorate and one in Ladhiqiyah governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported six violations in the following governorates: two in Damascus, two in Dar'a and two in Homs.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out three humanitarian operations in Aleppo city, delivering 3.6 tons of drinking water to the local population.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo was 3.6 tons.

Humanitarian aid was provided to 1,130 people.

In total, 1,379 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

During humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours, Russian field medics have provided medical assistance to 213 people.

One United Nations humanitarian operation was carried out: the Russian airline Abakan Air parachuted a total of 20 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products) near to the city of Dayr-al-Zawr.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, 11 ceasefire agreements have been signed in Homs governorate.

The size of the population living in the areas that signed the agreements was approximately 34,000 people.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,828.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 223.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (23 June 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 13 incidents of gunfire in the following governorates: five in Damascus, five in Ladhiqiyah, two in Aleppo and one in Hama.

The Turkish representative office has reported 12 violations in the following governorates: six in Damascus, four in Dar'a, one in Hama and one in Homs.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out seven humanitarian operations: six in Aleppo city, delivering 1.8 tons of food parcels to the local population; and one in Homs governorate, delivering 1.98 tons of food parcels to the local population.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo was 3.78 tons.

Humanitarian aid was provided to 1,188 people.

In total, 1,386 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

During humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours, Russian field medics have provided medical assistance to 237 people.

One United Nations humanitarian operation was carried out: the Russian airline Abakan Air parachuted a total of 20 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products) near to the city of Dayr-al-Zawr.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire regime agreements have been signed with populated areas.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process remains unchanged at 1,828.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs, Idlib and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 223.

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Security Council

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23 June 2017

Original: English

Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the fortieth submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015) and paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on the data available to United Nations agencies and from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as from other Syrian and open sources. Data from United Nations agencies on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 31 May 2017.

Box 1
Key points in May 2017

(1) On 4 May, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey signed a memorandum on the creation of four de-escalation areas, where hostilities between the conflicting parties are to cease (including the use of aerial assets). It aims to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and create conditions for the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

(2) Only three inter-agency cross-line convoys were deployed in May. Of those, only one, a convoy to Duma on 2 May, deployed to a besieged area.

(3) Evacuations out of the Wa'r district in Homs city were completed on 21 May. Since a local agreement between Government and non-State armed opposition groups to evacuate reached on 13 March, a total of 13 rounds of evacuation took place; around 20,000 persons left the district, with most going to Aleppo and Idlib.

(4) The Syrian Democratic Forces, supported by the international counter-ISIL coalition led by the United States of America, continued the advance towards Raqqah city amid heavy air strikes and increased ground fighting, reaching an area within five km of Raqqah city by 31 May.

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(5) On 7 May, the United Nations resumed life-saving humanitarian assistance at the berm between the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan with a second aid distribution cycle. Throughout the month of May, food and essential items have been delivered to approximately 27,600 individuals in the Rukban community in preparation for the summer months.

II. Major developments

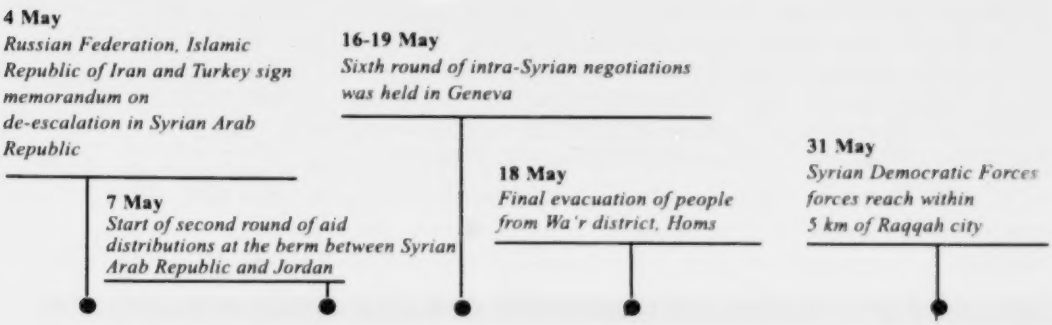
3. At a high-level meeting convened in Astana on 3 and 4 May, Iran (Islamic Republic of) the Russian Federation and Turkey signed a memorandum on the creation of four de-escalation areas, where hostilities between the conflicting parties are to cease (including the use of aerial assets). One of the aims of the memorandum is to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and create conditions for the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons. At the same time, the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Nusrah Front is to continue both within and outside the de-escalation areas. The four areas identified are (a) Idlib governorate and certain parts of neighbouring Ladhiqiyah, Hama and Aleppo governorate, (b) parts of northern rural Homs governorate, (c) eastern Ghutah in Rif Dimashq, and (d) certain parts of southern Syria (Dar'a and Qunaytirah governorates). An expert-level joint working group on de-escalation was formed among the guarantors to map the de-escalation areas, separate the moderate armed opposition groups from terrorist groups, and resolve remaining operational issues. The joint working group met in Ankara on 18 May and again on 24 and 25 May.

4. Following the agreement of the memorandum, on 4 May, violence decreased in the areas likely to be included in de-escalation areas. Hostilities in Dar'a, despite its status as a de-escalation area, increased during the month. In addition, some military activities continued to be reported inside and outside de-escalation areas throughout the reporting period. Air strikes and artillery shelling were reported in the governorates of Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Hama, Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Aleppo, Idlib, Homs and Ladhiqiyah.

5. At the same time as some areas saw a de-escalation, anti-ISIL operations appear to have intensified in eastern parts of the country. Pro-government forces, non-State armed opposition groups, Syrian Democratic Forces led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units and the United States-led international coalition to counter ISIL all continued their offensives against ISIL targets in Raqqah, Homs and Dayr al-Zawr governorates. On 18 May, the United States military struck a convoy of Government forces and allied militias that was moving towards Tanf, near the Syrian Arab Republic's border with Iraq and Jordan. United States officials described this as a defensive action while the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly criticized it as a violation of its sovereignty.

6. Local agreements between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and non-State armed opposition groups in besieged areas continued to be reached and implemented throughout the month of May. The United Nations has not been involved in the negotiations, agreements or subsequent evacuations surrounding these local agreements. Some of the initiatives raise concerns owing to the reported absence of adequate consultation with the civilian populations living in areas covered by such agreements and the reported lack of adequate safety and security guarantees and procedures to protect the rights of those affected.

Figure I
Key dates in May 2017


4 May
Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey sign memorandum on de-escalation in Syrian Arab Republic
7 May
Start of second round of aid distributions at the berm between Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan
16-19 May
Sixth round of intra-Syrian negotiations was held in Geneva
18 May
Final evacuation of people from Wa'r district, Homs
31 May
Syrian Democratic Forces forces reach within 5 km of Raqqah city

7. Following a local agreement between the Government and non-State armed opposition groups in the Wa'r district in Homs city on 13 March, 13 evacuations were conducted, with a total of 19,822 persons evacuated from Wa'r district to Aleppo and Idlib governorates and to northern rural Homs during the period between 13 March and 21 May. After completion of those evacuations on 21 May, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic assumed full control of the district. Since the conclusion of the evacuations, a few dozen evacuees have returned from Jarabulus to Wa'r, citing dire humanitarian conditions.

Box 2
The berm between the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan

(1) Since 2012, small numbers of Syrians have fled to Rukban and Hadalat along Jordan's north-eastern border with the Syrian Arab Republic (referred to as the berm). More Syrians began seeking to cross into north-eastern Jordan around September 2015, as aerial bombardments intensified across the country; pressure peaked at the berm in May 2016, when over 100,000 people were estimated to be amassing between the two locations. There are currently an estimated 60,000 people present in the area.

(2) Following an attack on the border guard post at Rukban on 21 June 2016, the Government of Jordan sealed the border and declared the entire north-eastern border region as a closed military zone with no civilian access. Supplies of water continued largely uninterrupted, with the provision of an average of 13.2 l per person per day at Rukban. In August 2016, a one-off delivery of humanitarian assistance was agreed upon, delivered by crane. Following further discussions, the resumption of the delivery of humanitarian assistance was permitted in November 2016, through a newly set-up distribution area. That distribution was completed on 12 January 2017.

(3) Planning for the next cycle of aid distributions was met with a series of logistical, administrative and security challenges and did not resume until 7 May, when the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance restarted at the berm. Throughout the month of May, food and essential items have been delivered to approximately 27,600 individuals in Rukban in preparation for the summer months. The construction of a new water station and pipe network has been completed and is scheduled to become operational in the coming weeks.

(4) In addition, a United Nations health clinic set up in December 2016 continues to receive and treat the most vulnerable medical cases, as well as assisting with referrals inside Jordan. Since its opening, and up to the end of May, 4,093 consultations have been conducted at the clinic and 236 cases were referred to hospitals in Jordan for further specialized treatment. Furthermore, between 27 May and 2 June, an emergency vaccination campaign took place, covering 10,592 children. The number of patients admitted for services at the health clinic was reduced in recent weeks owing to increased security concerns.

(5) Planning is now under way for the next cycle of aid distributions, after the Eid celebrations at the end of Ramadan.

8. Local agreements were also reached between the Government and non-State armed opposition groups in eastern Damascus, adjacent to eastern Ghutah (which is one of the four de-escalation areas), in Barzah on 7 May, in Tishrin on 11 May and in Qabun on 13 May. Between 8 and 29 May, 9,774 people were evacuated from those districts to Idlib. The Government subsequently assumed full control of those areas. On 8 May, around 70 persons, including 20 patients, were evacuated from al-Yarmouk camp in southern Damascus to Idlib. In exchange, on the same day, five patients and 14 family members were evacuated from the besieged towns of Fu'ah and Kafraya in the northern countryside of Idlib.

9. The Syrian Democratic Forces, supported by the United States of America-led international counter-ISIL coalition, continued their advance towards Raqqah city amidst heavy air strikes and increased ground fighting in the western and eastern countryside of Raqqah. By 31 May, the Forces were within five km of Raqqah city. The Forces' advances towards Raqqah city displaced an estimated 100,000 people during the month of May. As the fighting draws closer to Raqqah city, vital civilian infrastructure continues to be affected, with reports of attacks on education facilities.

10. Many of the displaced are moving north of Raqqah city or towards the Ayn Isa transit centre and further on to other camps. There have been concerns over the action taken by the local authorities at the transit site, where displaced people are reportedly having their identification documents taken from them while they are being processed at the camps and not being granted freedom of movement. The United Nations and its partners are responding to provide humanitarian assistance to people displaced to those areas north of Raqqah city, where access is allowed.

11. Fighting in early May to the east of Tabaqah has also resulted in displacement, although many who were displaced have started to return. It is estimated that about 35,000 people are currently residing in Tabaqah town, compared to 80,000 before the fighting. Local authorities have prevented newly displaced persons arriving from the north from entering the city, citing security concerns. Many are staying in tents or open areas outside of the town. Humanitarian partners are responding with food distributions, but protection concerns, relating to mine contamination in particular, remain high.

12. On 1 and 2 May, extremist groups attacked the Rajm al-Salibi site in Hasakah governorate, near the border with Iraq, resulting in 22 deaths and 35 injuries. Rajm al-Salibi is used as a screening site for Iraqi refugees and Syrian internally displaced persons before their relocation to Al-Hol camp for internally displaced persons.

13. Following the progress achieved towards de-escalation in early May, my Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, convened the Syrian parties for a sixth round of intra-Syrian negotiations, held in Geneva from 16 to 19 May. During that round, the Special Envoy initiated technical consultations to more deeply explore

legal and constitutional issues relating to a political transition. Technical consultations were held between experts from the Office of the Special Envoy and experts designated by the negotiating delegations to the intra-Syrian talks. In parallel, the Special Envoy engaged with the Syrian Women's Advisory Board on modalities for the technical consultations; after the talks, the Special Envoy held intensive discussions with civil society organizations, from 22 to 24 May.

Protection

14. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians in significant numbers. As in the past, the high level of civilian casualties remains a strong indication that violations of the prohibition on launching indiscriminate attacks and of the principles of proportionality and precaution in and against the effects of attack are ongoing. Children have been particularly affected by the fighting and, in some incidents, constituted the majority of the casualties.

15. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical personnel and facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. Based on information received by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), civilian casualties in possible violation of international humanitarian law occurred in various governorates (see annex). OHCHR documented alleged incidents by many parties to the conflict, including Government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

16. The United States Department of Defense publicly confirmed that in May, the United States-led coalition carried out 585 strikes against ISIL targets in the governorates of Dayr al-Zawr, Hasakah, Homs and Raqqah. More than two thirds of those strikes were reported to have been in Raqqah governorate (with the vicinity of Raqqah city hit every day of the month), and over a quarter in the governorate of Dayr al-Zawr. On 25 May, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) announced that the body would become a full member of the international coalition, adding that NATO surveillance planes would help improve airspace management.

17. The Russian Federation publicly confirmed that they conducted strikes in May, with the Ministry of Defence stating in a 31 May briefing that they had fired cruise missiles on ISIL objects in the vicinity of Tadmur (Palmyra). The Ministry reportedly briefed the media that they had also carried out air strikes on ISIL targets travelling from Raqqah city to Tadmur (Palmyra).

18. The United Nations and health partners received credible reports of eight attacks that affected medical facilities and personnel throughout the month of May. Of those, five have been verified to date. Of the five verified attacks, four occurred on health-care facilities providing trauma treatment in rural Damascus, Homs, Hama and Dar'a. Collectively, the attacks resulted in the killing of at least two medical staff and wounding of at least 18 people, including three medical staff. One attack was registered against the Ibn Sina psychiatric hospital in Rural Damascus. Some departments of the hospital were partially damaged and four female patients were killed, while 17 patients and one nurse were injured.

19. Educational facilities continued to be affected as well. On 18 May 2017, ISIL fighters entered and used the Aqarib elementary school, 15 km north-east of Salamiyah city, Hama governorate, during a clash with Government forces.

Humanitarian access

Box 3
Key points for humanitarian access

(1) With a convoy to Duma on 2 May, one besieged area was reached through United Nations inter-agency cross-line operations in May, beyond Dayr al-Zawr (reached through airdrops). A total of two inter-agency convoys deployed in May reached two hard-to-reach areas, namely, Wadi Barada on 6 May and Jayrud on 22 May. Removal of medical supplies from the convoys remains a major challenge, with supplies sufficient for 90,827 people removed in May.

(2) As of the end of May, the United Nations had reached some 266,750 people under the April/May convoy plan, which constitutes 25 per cent of the 1,066,650 beneficiaries originally requested to be reached. Other inter-agency convoys could not proceed owing to a lack of approvals, including the lack of facilitation letters by the Syrian authorities; fighting and insecurity; and other restrictions after initial approvals.

(3) During the reporting period, some 1,243,572 beneficiaries were assisted by the United Nations and partners via cross-border operations from Turkey and Jordan.

(4) The United Nations and partners continue to respond to the humanitarian impact of fighting and insecurity in north-eastern Syria. While they are reaching hundreds of thousands in these governorates, restrictions by local authorities on the ground continued to hinder response efforts in May, including by causing difficulties in getting supplies to the area.

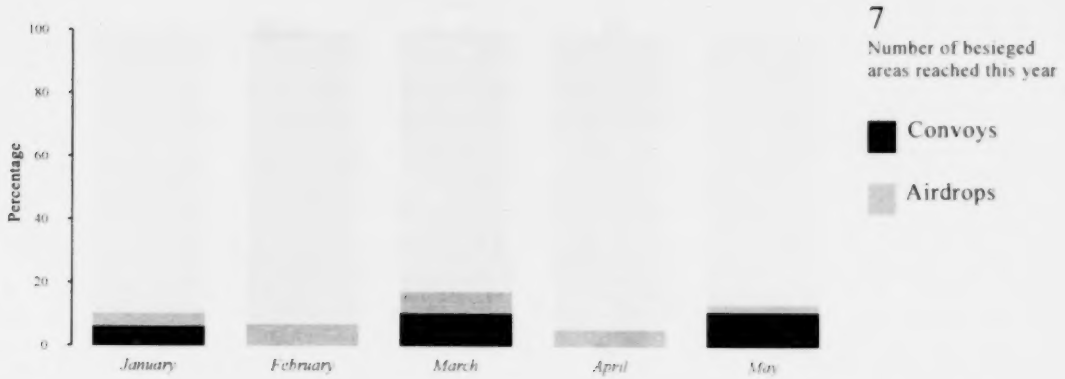
20. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas of the country as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict.

21. Access for the United Nations to those living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remains a critical concern. Three United Nations inter-agency convoys were dispatched to besieged and hard-to-reach locations in May (see table 4 for the list of inter-agency convoys in May). Convoys to other besieged and hard-to-reach areas, including those approved under the April-May inter-agency convoy plan, were unable to proceed as a result of fighting and insecurity, administrative delays by the Syrian authorities and restrictions applied by non-State armed opposition groups.

22. During the reporting period, United Nations agencies also undertook single-agency cross-line deliveries to hard-to-reach locations or reached those locations through their regular programmes. Meanwhile, both international and Syrian non-governmental organizations continued to undertake needs assessments and provide support (including medical, education, psychosocial and protection services) in besieged and hard-to-reach locations, under extremely challenging circumstances and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

Figure II

United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas, including via airdrops to Dayr al-Zawr city



23. A combination of insecurity, deliberate interference and restrictions by the parties to the conflict continued to prevent aid delivery. The majority of United Nations agencies and the majority of United Nations partners continue to be unable to access populations in need in areas of the country controlled by ISIL, as all plans to deliver assistance to these areas have been suspended as a result of their inability to work independently and monitor activities. This has prevented the United Nations and its humanitarian partners from reaching Raqqah city and most of Dayr al-Zawr governorate, as well as pockets of northern rural Aleppo, southern rural Hasakah and north-western rural Hama.

24. Meanwhile, restrictions continue to be imposed by non-State armed opposition groups and other local actors. For example, humanitarian organizations have reported challenges in obtaining approvals from local authorities in Kurdish-controlled areas in the north-east of the country, causing delays to programming. This included the local authorities denying requests by the World Food Programme (WFP) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) to deliver assistance to people in Hasakah governorate, as the authorities requested that all aid be redirected to support the response in Raqqah governorate. As a result, WFP was only able to deliver food for 18,750 people out of the 192,500 people they had planned to reach.

25. At the same time, humanitarian access for Turkey-based cross-border partners into Idlib governorate is also reportedly continuing to face more challenges, as non-State armed opposition groups, as well as groups designated as terrorist groups by the Security Council, are placing demands on non-governmental organizations operating in the governorate. Those organizations face registration requirements and/or are being requested to provide information on staffing, logistics and finances. The demands are not being applied consistently and have led some organizations to scale down or even temporarily suspend their operations, pending a resolution of such issues.

Figure III
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations (May 2017)

26. Life-saving and life-sustaining medical items sufficient for over 90,000 treatments were removed from convoys in May. The details of the treatments and supplies removed are given in table 2. Additional medical supplies were scheduled to be delivered as part of the monthly inter-agency convoy plan, but only three convoys were able to proceed. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2017, the World Health Organization has submitted nine single-agency requests to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to access 14 locations in five governorates. The Government approved two requests, six requests remain unanswered and one request has been rejected.

Table 2
Medical supplies removed from humanitarian convoys in May 2017

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
Jayrud	18 151	Pneumonia type A and B kits, intravenous therapy used for fluid replacement, latex examination gloves, anticholinergic and antispasmodic drugs, bronchodilators, different types of antibiotics, anti-inflammatory treatments and synthetic corticosteroids
Wadi Barada	53 948	Pneumonia type A and B kits, bronchodilators, antibiotic and analgesic treatments, and antipyretic drugs

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
Duma	18 628	Pneumonia type A and B kits, defibrillator, clear water kit with filter, anti-epileptic drugs, sterilizers, basic X-ray, ventilator for adults, intravenous therapy used for fluid replacement, anti-inflammatory treatments, synthetic corticosteroids, anticholinergic and antispasmodic drugs, and latex examination gloves

27. The United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for April and May requested access to 28 locations, including besieged areas, aiming to reach 1,066,650 people. Access to 764,950 beneficiaries was approved, representing 71.7 per cent out of a total of 1,066,650 beneficiaries to whom access had been requested. Nine locations were approved in full, while 13 locations were approved with either a lower number of beneficiaries in need than those identified by the United Nations, or without the number of beneficiaries who might be reached having been specified. Access was denied to six locations, comprising over 132,000 people. As of the end of May, the team had reached some 266,750 people with six convoys, representing 28 per cent of the people requested in the plan. Convoys to other approved locations in the plan could not be dispatched in April or May owing to non-approval by the Syrian authorities at the outset, as well as insecurity and fighting and delays with the issuance of facilitation letters in some instances.

28. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency convoys during the reporting period. For example, during the month of May, WFP submitted 1,795 official requests to obtain facilitation letters to transport food assistance to targeted locations across the country, the vast majority of which are for regularly accessible areas. Of those, three requests did not receive approval or response from the relevant authorities, preventing the delivery of food assistance for 10,000 people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) submitted requests for 42 facilitation letters for the movement of non-food items and livelihood kits within the Syrian Arab Republic, mostly to areas accessible under regular programming. 40 of those were approved, while two were rejected for security reasons. The United Nations Population Fund in Syria reached 12,874 people in hard-to-reach and besieged areas, with protection support.

29. The Nusaybin/Qamishli crossing in Hasakah governorate has been temporarily closed by the Turkish authorities since 27 December 2015 because of security concerns. This has interrupted land deliveries of United Nations humanitarian assistance to Hasakah governorate through borders surrounding the governorate. Hasakah governorate also remains largely inaccessible by road for United Nations agencies from within the Syrian Arab Republic owing to insecurity and the presence of ISIL along the routes. However, the road from Aleppo through Manbij to Hasakah has reopened for commercial traffic. While discussions continue to identify a land route for life-saving United Nations aid, the United Nations continues airlifts from Damascus to Qamishli airport to deliver multisectoral assistance.

Humanitarian response

30. In May, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all modalities from within the Syrian Arab Republic and across its borders (see table 3). In addition to the United Nations and partners, non-governmental organizations also continued to deliver life-saving assistance to people in need. The Government continued to provide basic services to

areas under its control as well as in many areas beyond its control. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services when possible.

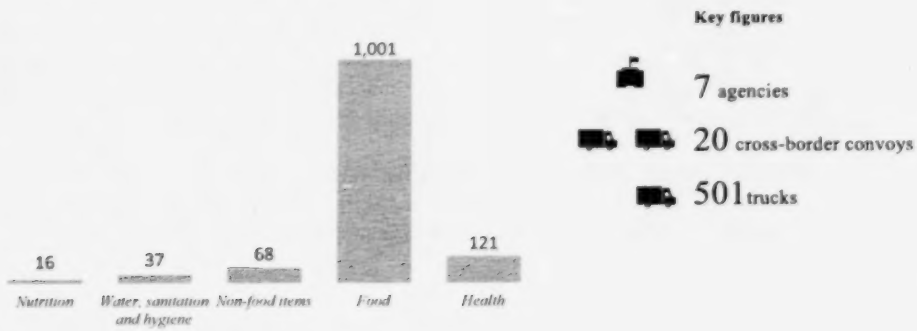
Table 3
Number of people reached by the United Nations and other organizations in May 2017

Organization	*Number of people reached*
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	47 688
International Organization for Migration	1 807 515
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	297 046
United Nations Children's Fund	>4 500 000
United Nations Development Programme	1 811 402
United Nations Population Fund	267 787
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	198 838
World Food Programme	3 650 000
World Health Organization	1 018 973

31. During the reporting period, cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (see figure IV for details). In line with those Security Council resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including content, destination and number of beneficiaries. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations, monitoring 501 trucks used in 20 convoys by seven United Nations entities in May, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Mechanism continued to benefit from excellent cooperation with the Governments of Jordan and Turkey.

Figure IV
Number of beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners per cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, May 2017

(Thousands)



32. Inter-agency convoys completed in May 2017 are listed in table 4 below. In total, the United Nations undertook three inter-agency convoys during the reporting month, all part of the April and May inter-agency convoy plan. In May, WFP carried

out 20 high-altitude airdrop rotations, airdropping food rations sufficient for 51,475 people as well as supplies from other humanitarian actors. In May, the logistics cluster conducted 53 airlift rotations to Qamishli, airlifting a total of 1,516 tons of WFP food and other supplies on behalf of other humanitarian actors. This enabled WFP to provide food assistance for 34,980 people in parts of Hasakah and Raqqah governorates.

Table 4
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian convoys: May 2017

Date	*Location*	*Requested target (number of beneficiaries)*	*Number of beneficiaries reached*	*Type of assistance*
2 May	Duma	75 000	70 000	Multisectoral
6 May	Wadi Barada	30 000	30 000	Multisectoral
22 May	Jayrud, Nasriyeh and Atanah	44 250	44 250	Multisectoral

33. The second cross-border polio campaign was conducted from 29 April to 11 May 2017, targeting children under the age of 5 in accessible areas in Idlib, Ladhiqiyah, Aleppo and Homs. The total number of children vaccinated by bivalent oral polio vaccine was 659,253. The accelerated implementation of routine immunization campaign, in collaboration with Médecins sans frontières Spain, began on 13 May in Aleppo, for 10 days. A total of 81,736 children were vaccinated. A national vaccination campaign against measles was also conducted from inside the Syrian Arab Republic during the period from 21 to 25 May, reaching over 1.5 million children in 12 governorates. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) vaccinated 8,560 Palestine refugee children against measles through its clinics as part of this campaign.

34. During May, UNICEF provided nutrition services for over 260,000 children and pregnant and lactating mothers through regular programming and cross-border and inter-agency cross-line operations. Nutrition services included preventive, therapeutic and supplementary interventions, including screening and treatment for cases of moderate and severe acute malnutrition.

35. For the fourth consecutive year, UNRWA supported 297 grade 9, and 82 grade 12 Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and Syrian students from Lebanon and Yarmouk to take their national examinations, on 14 May and 30 May, respectively. During the two-week examination period, UNRWA provided the young refugees with lodging and food, medical consultations, cash assistance, study sessions, psychosocial support and counselling, and recreational activities. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is also providing support to children from hard-to-reach and besieged areas in order for them to sit their national examinations. A total of 4,657 children coming from hard-to-reach areas in Hama, Hasakah and Ladhiqiyah were supported by UNICEF with education bursaries to sit for the grade 9 national examinations.

36. Throughout the month, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Visas and registrations

37. A total of 34 new visa requests were submitted to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in May. Of those, 13 applications were approved, 1 was rejected and 20 remain pending. A total of 18 new visa requests submitted in earlier months were approved in May, while 2 were rejected. A total of 57 visa renewal requests were submitted in May, of which 36 requests were approved and 21 remain pending. A further 19 visa renewals submitted in earlier months were also approved, while 2 remain pending.

38. A total of 21 international non-governmental organizations are registered with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to operate in the country. Four international non-governmental organizations are in the process of completing registration. Those organizations continued to face a series of administrative hurdles and restrictions that affect their ability to operate, including in gaining permission to undertake independent needs assessments. Some 217 national non-governmental organizations are authorized by the Syrian Arab Republic to partner with the United Nations.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

39. On 7 May, five improvised explosive devices were remotely detonated on the highway between Suwayda' and Damascus in the Lahithah area and damaged a civilian bus, causing a number of injuries. As a result, a mission by the Suwayda' field office of UNHCR, to Damascus, was postponed and all staff were advised to avoid using public transportation between Suwayda' and Damascus until further notice.

40. Since the start of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 21 staff members of the United Nations, 17 of whom were UNRWA staff members, 65 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and eight staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. In addition, many staff members of international and national non-governmental organizations are reported to have been killed. A total of 29 United Nations staff members, including 1 UNDP staff member and 28 UNRWA staff members, are detained or currently missing.

III. Observations

41. The signature of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas on 4 May created an opportunity to improve the situation of many civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic. While the exact boundaries have not been identified, the de-escalation areas include all besieged areas, except Dayr al-Zawr (besieged by ISIL). It is critical that de-escalation succeeds and that we see a sustained calm in these areas. I am mindful that the guarantors' efforts have resulted in a reduction of violence in the areas identified. This must be further expanded and should not lead to escalation of violence in other parts of the country. The creation of de-escalation areas must also result in a sustained increase in humanitarian access. Such an increase was not seen in May.

42. If implemented, the memorandum agreed on 4 May has the potential to solidify the 30 December 2016 ceasefire, facilitate unhindered humanitarian access to millions of civilians in the de-escalation areas and create an enabling environment for negotiations to achieve a political settlement of the Syrian conflict based on resolution 2254 (2015) and the Geneva communiqué of June 2012. The

de-escalation areas could serve to build trust among the conflicting sides and prepare the ground for progress in the political negotiations.

43. The United Nations stands ready to support the guarantors in the implementation of the memorandum, with a view to alleviating the suffering of the Syrian people and ensuring the implementation of the memorandum in line with relevant Security Council resolutions and international humanitarian and human rights law. The establishment of the de-escalation areas should also be accompanied by other confidence-building measures, including, as a matter of priority, measures regarding the issue of detainees.

44. Despite the reduction in fighting in many areas following the agreement, I remain deeply troubled by the situation on the ground for many civilians who suffer from the ongoing conflict. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, not only indiscriminately killing and injuring people, but also destroying and damaging vital infrastructure. I continue to reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call on all Member States to support the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

45. I am particularly concerned for those civilians who are affected by anti-ISIL operations, who face significant security and protection challenges from every direction, at home, and often face similar challenges again in displacement camps. All those conducting military operations in the Syrian Arab Republic must do so in compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular as it relates to the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and must facilitate humanitarian access to allow aid to reach those in urgent need of life-saving assistance. All efforts must be made to include a humanitarian concept of operations in military planning.

46. Those living in besieged areas also continue to face dire circumstances, although the number of people in those areas has been further reduced through the implementation of local agreements. In many instances, the agreements, to which the United Nations is not a party, followed prolonged periods of heavy fighting and restricted humanitarian assistance, for years on end. Thousands of people left besieged areas in May after local agreements in Wa'r, Barzah and Qabun. Such local agreements do not appear to meet international standards or provide the necessary humanitarian safeguards. Further, those departing often move to areas in which civilians and civilian infrastructure continue to be regularly attacked. As I have said before, any evacuation of civilians must be safe, voluntary and to a place of their choosing. It is imperative that all those who are displaced through local agreements have the right of return as soon as the situation allows.

47. Ultimately, an end to the Syrian people's suffering can only be achieved through a political process that brings a lasting solution to the Syrian conflict. I welcome the steps taken in the latest round of intra-Syrian talks in Geneva and the reconvening of the next round of intra-Syrian talks, to be held in, in Geneva. My Special Envoy continues to consult with the Syrian parties as well as regional and international stakeholders on preparations for the talks and the holding of further technical consultations with the participants.

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, May 2017[a]

Rif Dimashq and Damascus governorates

- On 1 May, air strikes hit a surgical hospital in opposition-controlled Hamuriyah, reportedly resulting in the death of three civilians, including one woman and two children.
- On 1 May, air strikes hit a residential area in the opposition-controlled city of Saqba, allegedly killing four male civilians.
- On 1 May, intense air strikes on a residential area in opposition-controlled Irbin reportedly killed one male civilian and injured an unknown number of others, including women and children.
- On 2 May, a Syrian Palestinian civilian died after he was allegedly hit by a sniper, on 29 April, in Government-controlled Hajar al-Aswad.
- On 4 May, a journalist working for opposition-backed outlets was allegedly shot in the Government-controlled area of Qabun by a sniper.
- On 14 May, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Abbadah, allegedly killing one male civilian.
- On 14 May, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Ash'ari, reportedly killing one male civilian.
- On 16 May, several ground-based strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Hamuriyah, allegedly resulting in the death of four civilians, including two girls and one woman, in addition to the injury of more than 25 others, including women and children.
- On 22 May, a ground-based strike hit a residential area in the vicinity of a market in the opposition-controlled area of Abbadah, reportedly killing at least one male civilian and injuring an unknown number of others.
- On 25 May, one male civilian was allegedly shot dead by a sniper as he was attempting to leave the Hajar al-Aswad area near a Government checkpoint.

Dar'a governorate

- On 2 May, an improvised explosive device detonated on the road between the opposition-controlled areas of Busra al-Hariri and Nahtah. The explosion reportedly resulted in the death of four Civil Defence members.
- On 3 May, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad, reportedly killing one civilian.

[a] In line with resolution 2258 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground, and the incidents during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate, relates to compliance with resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Cessation of Hostilities of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- On 3 May, an improvised explosive device exploded in an opposition-controlled area on the road between Musayfirah and Eastern Karak, allegedly killing two civilians.
- On 5 May, air strikes hit opposition-controlled Ibta' city, reportedly killing a child.
- On 5 May, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad, resulting in the alleged death of one male civilian.
- On 17 May, ground-based strikes hit the opposition-controlled city of Muzayrib, reportedly killing one male civilian.
- On 18 May, ground-based strikes hit the Government-controlled residential areas of Kashif and Matar in Dar'a city. One strike reportedly hit a school and allegedly killed seven children, four of them girls, and injured at least 25 civilians, including 10 women and 5 children.
- On 18 May, an improvised explosive device exploded in the fields south of Dar'a city, reportedly killing one child.
- On 22 May, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Government-controlled Sahhari neighbourhood in Dar'a, allegedly killing one woman.
- On 23 May, an improvised explosive device detonated on the outskirts of Jallayn, reportedly killing a male civilian from Tafas.

Aleppo governorate

- On 3 May, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated near the interim Government building in I'zaz town, reportedly killing five civilians, including two Iraqi refugees.
- On 8 May, an air strike hit a vehicle traveling in the village of Rasm al-Falih, located near Maskanah. At least 16 civilians were allegedly killed, including 7 women and 3 children.
- On 9 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Rasm al-Falih, reportedly killing five children from the same family.
- On 10 May, helicopters are reported to have dropped bombs on residential areas of Samumah village near Maskanah, allegedly killing at least 14 civilians, including 8 children and 1 woman.

Idlib governorate

- On 3 May, air strikes hit a camp for internally displaced persons in opposition-controlled rural Jisr al-Shughur, reportedly killing a girl and injuring an unknown number of other civilians.
- On 13 May, a male civilian was reportedly killed when an improvised explosive device detonated in Sarmin.

Hama governorate

- On 2 May, air strikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Lataminah city, reportedly killing seven civilians from the same family, including five children and their mother.
- On 3 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Lataminah city, reportedly killing a 14-year-old girl.

- On 8 May, air strikes hit an agricultural area in Lataminah city, resulting in the alleged killing of one civilian.
- On 14 May, a 14-year-old child was reportedly killed when an unexploded ordnance exploded in Lataminah city.
- On 15 May, air strikes hit residential areas in ISIL-held Suha village in rural Uqayribat, allegedly killing two children and injuring an unknown number of civilians.
- On 16 May, air strikes hit a convoy of vehicles transporting civilians in Suha, reportedly killing at least 15 civilians, including women and children, and injuring an unknown number of others.
- On 17 May, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Lataminah city, reportedly killing a 13-year-old girl and injuring an unknown number of civilians.
- On 18 May, ISIL fighters reportedly raided the Government-controlled village of Aqarib north-east of Salamiyah, resulting in the deaths of 36 civilians, including 19 children and 9 women. While many of the civilians were killed in the crossfire, a number of them were reportedly shot or had their throats cut by ISIL fighters. Dozens of other civilians were injured in the incident.
- On 18 May, ground-based strikes repeatedly hit Government-controlled Salamiyah, striking residential areas, a market and an electricity station. Two male civilians were reportedly killed and an estimated seven civilians injured in the incidents.
- On 18 May, air strikes hit residential areas of Lataminah city, allegedly killing a 13-year-old girl and injuring an unknown number of civilians.
- On 21 May, ground-based strikes hit Salamiyah, reportedly killing one male civilian and injuring at least three others, including two children and a woman.
- Around 21 May, air strikes hit ISIL-held Uqayribat in eastern rural Hama, allegedly killing eight civilians from the same family, including four women and one child.
- On 26 May, air strikes hit residential areas in ISIL-held Hamadah village in rural Uqayribat, reportedly killing three male civilians and injuring others.
- On 28 May, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Salamiyah, allegedly injuring seven civilians, including six children and an elderly man.

Homs governorate

- On 6 May, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Talbisah in northern rural Homs, reportedly killing a child.
- On 10 May, air strikes hit residential areas of ISIL-held Sukhnah east of Tadmur (Palmyra), allegedly killing five women and injuring an unknown number of civilians.
- On 13 May, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Talbisah, reportedly killing two male civilians.
- On 16 May, air strikes hit residential areas in the opposition-controlled town of Kafr Laha in northern Homs governorate, allegedly killing a female teacher.
- On 23 May, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device exploded near a checkpoint in Zahra' neighbourhood in Homs, reportedly killing four civilians, including two women, and injuring 30 persons.

- On 29 May, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in Government-controlled upper Mukharram town in eastern Homs, reportedly killing four civilians from the same family, including a mother and her child.

Dayr al-Zawr governorate

- On 8 May, ground-based strikes hit Qusur and Jurah neighbourhoods in Government-controlled Dayr al-Zawr city, allegedly killing four civilians, including three children, and injuring at least another two.
- On 10 May, air strikes hit residential areas of Sur village in northern Dayr al-Zawr governorate, reportedly killing at least eight civilians, including four children, and injuring six other civilians.
- On 14 May, ground-based strikes hit houses in Qusur neighbourhood in Dayr al-Zawr and reportedly killed seven civilians.
- On 15 May, air strikes hit two areas in ISIL-controlled Albu Kamal city in eastern Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing at least 59 civilians (eight of whom were Iraqi refugees), including 16 children and 12 women, and injuring no less than 70 others. Three strikes hit close to Ar-Rahman mosque area, and soon thereafter six strikes hit the houses of civilians in the densely-populated Hajjanah area of the city. Most of the casualties were reported in Hajjanah area. The United States-led coalition stated in its public reporting that on the same day, it had conducted two strikes, which destroyed three ISIL well heads near Albu Kamal.
- On 16 May, ISIL fighters in Albu Kamal allegedly cut the throats of eight men — four each at the 2 locations where air strikes had hit in the city the previous day — stating that the men were killed for providing the coordinates for the strikes.
- On 18 May, unmanned aerial vehicles reportedly dropped bombs on the Government-controlled neighbourhood of Harabish in Dayr al-Zawr city, allegedly killing at least 11 civilians, including 4 children and 3 women, and injuring more than 20 other civilians. Those killed and wounded were attending a wedding ceremony that was taking place in the area.
- On 19 May, a small group of ISIL fighters entered the Syrian Democratic Forces-controlled village of Albu Shams in western rural Dayr al-Zawr governorate and reportedly killed at least 28 civilians, including a woman and her daughter; they were reportedly shot at close range. An unknown number of other civilians were reported missing.
- On 22 May, air strikes hit residential buildings in ISIL-controlled neighbourhood of Kinamat in Dayr al-Zawr city and reportedly killed seven civilians, including four women, and injured at least 20 others. The United States-led coalition stated in its public reporting that on the same day, it had conducted five strikes, which destroyed four ISIL oil trucks, three ISIL pump jacks and an ISIL well head near Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 23 May, ground-based strikes hit Jurah neighbourhood in Dayr al-Zawr city and allegedly killed at least four civilians, including a woman.
- On 24 May, air strikes hit several locations in Mayadin city and reportedly killed at least 11 civilians, including 4 children and 2 women, and injured at least nine others.
- On 24 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Muhaymidah village in western Dayr al-Zawr and allegedly killed two children and injured two other civilians.

- On 25 May, air strikes hit Mayadin city within the vicinity of the Saraya roundabout near the court building, reportedly killing a five-year-old boy in addition to three other civilians, one of them a woman.
- On 26 May, further air strikes in Mayadin hit two buildings, one of them the municipality building, where families of ISIL fighters were reportedly based. At least 100 civilians, 40 or more of them children, were allegedly killed.
- On 30 May, ground-based strikes hit Albu Kamal, reportedly killing three civilians, including a woman and her granddaughter.

Raqqah governorate

- On 7 May, air strikes hit two residential buildings in Hay al-Thalith neighbourhood in then ISIL-controlled Tabaqah city in western Raqqah governorate, reportedly killing at least 21 civilians, including 8 children and 4 women and injuring dozens of others. The United States-led coalition stated in its public reporting that on the same day, it had conducted two strikes that engaged ISIL tactical units and destroyed a fighting position near Tabaqah.
- On 8 May, a child and another civilian were allegedly killed when air strikes hit their home in Dibsi Afnan village in the western part of the governorate.
- On 9 May, air strikes hit residential areas in ISIL-controlled Salihiyah village in eastern Raqqah governorate, reportedly killing 11 civilians, including 6 women and 2 children, and injuring at least nine other civilians.
- On 14 May, air strikes hit two vehicles transporting farm workers, many of them women, working in cotton fields in Akarshah village in the eastern part of the governorate, reportedly resulting in the killing of 23 civilians, including 17 women, and injuring five other civilians, including two women.
- On 21 May, air strikes hit residential buildings in Kudayran village in western Raqqah governorate and allegedly killed at least 14 civilians, 3 of them children, as well as injuring another 20 civilians.
- On 23 May, two children and their father were reportedly killed when an improvised explosive device detonated in the rural Syrian Democratic Forces-controlled Mazra'at Hittin village in northern Raqqah governorate.
- On 23 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Barudah village in the western part of the governorate, reportedly killing 16 civilians, including 4 women and 6 children from the same family, and injuring at least seven other civilians.
- On 23 May, two civilians, a woman and her husband, were allegedly killed when an improvised explosive device detonated in Hay al-Thani neighbourhood in Tabaqah city, western rural Raqqah.
- On 24 May, two civilians, a man and his child, were reportedly killed in Hay al-Thani area of Tabaqah when an improvised explosive device detonated in the vicinity.
- On 24 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Dibsi Faraj and Dibsi Afnan in the western parts of the governorate, allegedly killing two women and injuring another two.
- On 27 May, air strikes hit a home in Raqqah city, reportedly killing at least six civilians from one family, including a girl, and injuring three other civilians.

Hasakah governorate

- On 2 May, an improvised explosive device detonated in the proximity of a checkpoint controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces at the Rajm al-Salibi screening site for internally displaced persons in southern Hasakah. The operation was followed by heavy armed clashes between the Forces and ISIL fighters. At least 19 civilians, including women and children, were reportedly killed in the crossfire and 18 others injured, including at least 4 women and 4 children.

- On 21 May, air strikes hit residential areas in Ruwayyih village in southern Hasakah governorate, reportedly killing at least seven civilians, including two women, and injuring another five civilians.

United Nations A/71/968–S/2017/542

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda item 31
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Letter dated 26 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a commentary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the unauthorized visit of the Russian delegation to the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukraine) on 24 June 2017 (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 31, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Commentary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on yet another unauthorized visit of the Russian delegation headed by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, to the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukraine) on 24 June 2017

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its strong protest against yet another visit of the Russian delegation led by the President, Vladimir Putin, on 24 June 2017 to the territory of Ukraine that has been temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukraine).

Ukraine considers the above-mentioned visit and other so-called "trips" of Russian officials to the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine) to be a gross violation of the State sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and a cynical and demonstrative negation by Russia of generally accepted norms of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions 68/262 entitled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine", of 27 March 2014, and 71/205 entitled "Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)", of 19 December 2016, as well as obligations under bilateral and multilateral treaties to which Ukraine and Russia are parties.

A note of protest has been sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

United Nations S/2017/543

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 June 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 26 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write to you in your capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of June 2017 to draw the Security Council's attention, once again, to the substantial losses suffered by the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiaries under the current sanctions regime. These unnecessary and debilitating financial losses are due to the inability of the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiaries to direct the financial institutions that hold their assets to manage them with a reasonable standard of care. This case was officially brought to the attention of the Security Council more than one year ago in the letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/275), in which he requested your urgent intervention to protect the Libyan assets, but no real action has been taken since then. Furthermore, I alerted the members of the Security Council in my statement before the Council on 7 June 2017 to the urgent and vital need to take expeditious measures to amend the related resolutions in order to allow for better management of the frozen Libyan assets to stop and prevent the continued substantial loss in value of these assets due to the ongoing sanction regime imposed since 2011.

In response to the previous request of 21 March 2016, the Security Council, in its resolution 2278 (2016), affirmed its "readiness to consider changes, when appropriate, to the asset freeze at the request of the Government of National Accord". By the present letter, I confirm this is the request of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord. Moreover, and more importantly, all people of Libya will benefit from these proposed changes by ensuring that the catastrophic financial losses now facing the sovereign wealth funds, to the sole benefit of various international banks, and to the detriment of the Libyan people and their legacy, will be reversed.

To that end, the Libyan authorities concerned kindly request the Security Council to take urgent action to amend resolutions 1970 (2011), 1973 (2011) and 2009 (2011) to explicitly allow the Libyan Investment Authority to engage in fund management within the frozen accounts and to prevent the further dissipation of the assets of the Libyan Investment Authority.

The Libyan authorities are not requesting any assets to be unfrozen, but rather, they are requesting a Security Council resolution provision that will explicitly permit the movement of funds between frozen accounts and will permit the reinvestment of funds and the closing and opening of accounts, so that the value of

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assets of the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiary funds may be protected and so that the returns can be maximized during the time that they remain frozen.

The assets of the Libyan Investment Authority remain frozen pursuant to resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011), as amended in resolution 2009 (2011). When the assets freeze was originally put in place, it was of course not intended as a punishment to Libya, but rather a measure to protect the assets from dissipation during the revolution and the transition after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. Yet the assets freeze is now having a very serious negative impact on the interests of the Libyan people.

The Libyan Investment Authority estimates that, in 2014 alone, instead of increasing the value of its assets base, it had real losses of $721 million. Furthermore, it lost an additional $1.6 billion to $2.3 billion in what would have been returns on investments if its assets had been properly invested in conservative investments with competitive interest rates. These losses have only increased, on an annual basis, since 2014, as more of the investments of the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiaries have matured, and as more banks refuse to pay market interest or returns on these assets. These assets represent the future of the Libyan people and they are being squandered by a sanctions regime that is flawed in its rigidity and that could easily be fixed by this Council.

To elaborate more on this problem and the proposed remedy, the Libyan Investment Authority has three main investment portfolios: equity investments, fixed income investments and alternative investments. The Libyan Investment Authority has no access to its equity portfolio and, hence, cannot respond to market changes or currency fluctuations, which are constantly eroding the value of that portfolio. Moreover, most of the bonds that the Libyan Investment Authority had in its fixed income portfolio have matured, and the proceeds are in frozen accounts, where they are earning zero or negative rates of interest. Also, the alternative investments portfolio is inaccessible to the external investment managers, who still charge the Libyan Investment Authority management fees, even though they are not managing the funds. In fact, if the fund is underperforming, the Libyan Investment Authority is not able to close the fund or transfer it to another manager. Thus, there is no incentive for these private financial institutions and managers who are holding Libyan Investment Authority funds to provide competitive interest rates or to manage the funds effectively.

The squandering of the value of these assets is not acceptable and should be fixed as soon as possible. Since the Permanent Representative of Libya formally alerted you to this problem in March 2016, the Libyan Investment Authority estimates it has lost billions of dollars more in value.

The Panel of Experts on Libya acknowledged that this problem needs to be corrected in its report to the Security Council dated 3 March 2016 (S/2016/209), stating in paragraph 257: "It was clearly not the aim of the Security Council that the investments should be diminished, meaning that this matter needs to be clarified, preferably by including an explicit exemption for fund management in a future resolution". Furthermore, the Panel's recommendation 8 provides: "To explicitly allow and encourage the reinvestment of assets frozen under the measures, in consultation with the Government of Libya, in order to protect the value of investments of designated individuals and entities".

The Security Council should take immediate action to correct this problem. The Libyan authorities request that the following language be included in a new Security Council resolution:

(a) The Libyan Investment Authority shall not be prohibited from the movement of funds between accounts, the closing and opening of accounts, the liquidation of accounts and the investment and reinvestment of its funds or other financial assets and economic resources, provided that such actions meet the following three requirements: (i) any transfer is to a frozen account that is in the same name as the transferor; (ii) the transfer does not represent, directly or indirectly, a transfer of any interest of the Libyan Investment Authority to any other person subject to sanctions under the Security Council; and (iii) the transfer is in accordance with the applicable procedures of the Member State(s) which have jurisdiction over the funds or other financial assets and economic resources;

(b) The Libyan Government shall report to the Sanctions Committee all transactions performed by the Libyan Investment Authority pursuant to and in compliance with this resolution, and the Sanctions Committee shall provide guidance to Member States with regard to the implementation of this resolution.

The requested amendment to the above-mentioned Security Council resolutions is intended to safeguard the interests of the Libyan people while keeping frozen all assets of the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiaries that are currently frozen.

I would appreciate the understanding and support of the members of the Security Council for this modest, but critical, change to the sanctions regime, to preserve the value of the assets of the Libyan Investment Authority and its subsidiaries, for the benefit of all Libyan people. I strongly urge the Security Council to take our important, fair, just and urgent request on board during the revision of resolution 2278 (2016) and that it be reflected in the new revised resolution.

I look forward to swift action by the Security Council on this issue.

(*Signed*) Elmahdi **Elmajerbi**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2017/544

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 June 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Note verbale dated 26 June 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the Security Council and has the honour to transmit herewith a letter from Faiez Mustafa Serraj, President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, addressed to the President of the Security Council regarding the Libyan assets frozen under Security Council sanctions (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 26 June 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the current month and to wish you success. Moreover, I am very grateful for your efforts to help my country, Libya, restore stability and build and sustain peace, so that it can be an active member of the international community and contribute to the promotion of international peace and security.

I have learned that the Security Council sanctions committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) has received letters from Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York asking it to grant exemptions whereby some of the so-called debts of the Libyan Government could be repaid from accounts that were frozen pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011), in particular the accounts of the Libyan Investment Authority, its affiliated companies and its holdings. The above-mentioned letters refer to letters signed by members of the Presidency Council. I therefore wish to inform you of the following:

First, pursuant to the Libyan Political Agreement, the decisions of the Presidency Council are issued in accordance with the procedures set out in the Agreement and are signed by the President of the Presidency Council. Moreover, no other member of the Presidency Council, whether parliamentary representatives or ministers who have chosen to attend or boycott the meetings of the Presidency Council, may communicate with any foreign entity, in particular States and international organizations. The President of the Presidency Council is only person authorized to sign resolutions and the letters of the Presidency Council, and he must do so personally. Therefore, any letter that was sent to you by any other Presidency Council member is invalid, as are any other similar letters you may have received previously or might receive in the future, even if they are printed on the official stationery of the Presidency Council, unless they are personally signed by the President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord.

Second, the manner in which the funds and assets, and even the revenues, of the Libyan Investment Authority are utilized is regulated by the law that established the Authority. The main purpose of the Libyan Investment Authority is to safeguard the rights of future generations. Even its revenues, should there be any, are not be utilized for the above-mentioned purposes.

Third, I should like to remind you that the value of the frozen assets of the Libyan Investment Authority has declined because of the sanctions regime established pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011). Instead of protecting those frozen assets and allowing some revenue to be generated from them, the sanctions regime has caused their value to drop significantly. Therefore, in the case of Libya, the sanctions regime has not achieved its intended purpose, which is to protect and safeguard those assets and not to allow them to be squandered, which is what is happening. I shall write to you in another letter about that matter and the negative effect it has had on the assets of the Libyan people's sovereign fund, and the need to address that matter as soon as possible.

(*Signed*) Faiez Mustafa **Serraj**
President of the Presidency Council
of the Government of National Accord

United Nations S/2017/545

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 June 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 26 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and further to previous letters regarding grave and recurring violations by Turkey of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, I should like to inform you of fresh violations of Syrian sovereignty that have been committed by the Turkish regime and of the regime's continuing support for terrorism and the threat it poses to international peace and security.

The Turkish regime has continued to illegally seize property and land belonging to Syrian citizens and to build walls inside Syrian territory, including one built recently extending from the Harim district in Idlib governorate to the village of Fawziyah, passing through the villages and districts of Dayr al-Ruhban, Sakhrah, Zal'um, Wazawazah, Kafr Hum and Dalbiya. It also built a wall inside Syrian territory in the Jisr al-Shughur area of Idlib governorate, in the villages and districts of Khirbat al-Jawz, Bayt Sufan, Zawf, Zanbaqi, Ayn Sharatit, Dirriyah and Ayn al-Bayda. Another wall that the Turkish regime built inside Syrian territory extends from the city of Ayn Diwar to Amuda district in Hasakah governorate.

During their attack, Turkish military forces kidnapped a number of Syrian civilians from the above-mentioned villages and districts, uprooted fruit trees and razed the land that they had seized. They also made incursions into Syrian territory, grabbing farmland belonging to Syrian citizens in the villages and districts of Sarmada, Wastah, Ra's al-Hisn and Mazuq in Idlib governorate and building barrier walls in those areas. They also attacked and seized the archaeological sites of Qasr Iblis and Khirbat Tizin.

The Turkish regime is continuing its attacks against Syrian territory with a view to undermining the sovereignty and security of the Syrian Arab Republic and its territorial unity and integrity; the regime is also continuing to support terrorist groups and to steal and loot public and private property in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns the Turkish Government's continued and recurring attacks and crimes against the Syrian people and the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Syria. It once again calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security and put an end to the Turkish regime's acts of aggression and outrageous violations of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and all Security Council resolutions on Syria and counter-

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terrorism, as well as the regime's violation of the principles of friendly relations and good-neighbourliness among States endorsed by the General Assembly. The Turkish Government must be held accountable for those violations. It must also be compelled to halt its support for terrorism and immediately implement Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Louay **Falouh**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2017/546

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 July 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 27 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the fortieth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (S/2017/541).

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms the points made in its previous responses to reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the aforementioned Security Council resolutions.

The Syrian Government regrets to say that, after 40 reports, it sees no sign that the Secretariat has adopted a new, objective approach to the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The authors have continued to deliberately neglect the real reasons for the decline in the living standards and humanitarian situation of Syrians, including terrorism, the unilateral coercive economic measures imposed on the Syrian people by the United States of America, the European Union and other States, and interference by certain regional and international actors in Syrian affairs, with a view to prolonging the crisis and obstructing efforts to arrive at a peaceful political resolution through the Syrian-led political process that the United Nations has repeatedly endorsed. Indeed, United Nations officials have helped to prolong the crisis by their insistence on characterizing the situation in Syria as a "conflict" among Syrian parties, rather than a proxy war waged by the Governments of States Members of the United Nations against the Syrian State through military interference, direct and blatant aggression, and the use of terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters.

The Syrian Government deplores the ongoing efforts of those responsible for preparing the report to cover up the key role played by the Syrian State and Syrian institutions, and the remarkable effort they have made, despite enormous challenges, to meet the basic subsistence needs of and provide essential services to the Syrian people throughout the country, including in regions where armed terrorist groups are present. Government-provided assistance has been essential to the success of any humanitarian work carried out by United Nations organizations, something that the Secretariat should have addressed in the report, including in paragraphs 33 to 36.

The Syrian Government stresses that it alone is authorized to ensure the safety and security of Syrians and to protect them. It has a constitutional duty under

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national legislation and international law to fight the terrorism of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Nusrah Front and associated entities and terrorist individuals with numerous names and allegiances. Countering terrorism is essential to restoring security and stability, increasing the amount of assistance delivered and improving the humanitarian situation and living conditions of Syrians.

The Syrian Government reiterates that in the course of carrying out its counter-terrorism efforts, it has complied fully with the provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, particularly with regard to ensuring the security and safety of civilians and civilian service facilities, such as hospitals and schools. The Syrian Government is committed to international humanitarian law, which it seeks to disseminate and enforce. It has therefore strengthened the role of the Syrian National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and has organized numerous national activities and training sessions on international humanitarian law.

The Syrian Government is committed to the cessation of hostilities agreement that entered into force on 30 December 2016, and it condemns in the strongest possible terms the non-compliance of the armed terrorist groups and their backers. These groups have continued to violate the agreement, mounting attacks in numerous locations, firing mortar shells, committing heinous crimes and carrying out suicide attacks that have killed hundreds of Syrians and wounded hundreds more.

The Syrian Government rejects the erroneous political messages and claims that the authors of the report put forward in order to accuse the Syrian Government of besieging or deliberately preventing aid from reaching parts of Syria. The Syrian Government stresses that just as in other parts of Syria where national reconciliation agreements had been concluded, the successful implementation of a national reconciliation agreement in the Wa'r neighbourhood of Homs ended the suffering of thousands of civilians in that neighbourhood who had been used as human shields for years by armed terrorist groups. The Government furthermore stresses that civilians and armed individuals from that neighbourhood were allowed to choose whether they wished to remain there or go somewhere else. They were not put under any pressure at all. Indeed, hundreds of persons who had chosen to go to Jarabulus returned to the Wa'r neighbourhood, choosing to live under the protection of the Syrian State and return to their normal lives. Those who oppose national reconciliation agreements in Syria support terrorism and want to prolong the crisis.

The Syrian Government emphasizes that the Secretariat must take care in selecting the sources of its information in order to ensure due professionalism, objectivity and credibility. The Secretariat should therefore refrain from relying on information provided by the "open sources" for which the authors have a predilection. Their sole aim is to malign the Syrian Government and wipe clean the ledger of the terrorist groups and their backers.

The Syrian Government reiterates that it rejects the authors' use of non-legal terminology and characterizations. For instance, it has referred to armed terrorist groups as "non-State armed opposition", despite understanding full well that those groups are connected with the terrorist groups ISIL and the Nusrah Front. Their conduct in this regard distorts reality and violates United Nations resolutions on combating terrorism.

The Syrian Government finds it deplorable that the authors have continued to promote the operations of the so-called international coalition while deliberately ignoring the reality that the coalition has no legitimacy, that the Syrian Government never asked for it, and that the Security Council never authorized it. They also fail to mention the consequences of the coalition's acts of aggression, which have

claimed the lives of thousands of innocent civilians and wreaked horrific damage on the infrastructure, including dams, bridges, hospitals and schools. The coalition's attacks have also reversed the development gains made by the Syrian people and destroyed economic resources that they need for rebuilding, most importantly oil and gas wells and related facilities and equipment. It is regrettable that the reports' authors fail to mention that, on 26 May 2017, "international coalition" warplanes bombed the Syrian city of Mayadin in south-eastern Dayr al-Zawr governorate, killing 35 civilians, most of them women and children, and injuring dozens more. The Syrian Government believes that the authors' failure to mention the crimes committed by the "international coalition" demonstrates blatant bias on their part. Indeed, the United Nations should have reaffirmed the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial unity and integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic when it noted in the report that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had joined the international coalition.

The Syrian Government finds it regrettable that the Secretariat has ignored the acts of aggression committed by the Turkish regime. Unfortunately, the Secretariat is attempting to legitimize the actions of the Turkish regime and its allies in Syria. Such actions are blatant attacks against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, flagrantly violate international law and the Charter of the United Nations, amount to direct support for terrorism and have helped to prolong the crisis.

The Syrian Government finds it deplorable that the authors of the report commend the humanitarian efforts of Jordan but ignore the suffering of Syrians in the border areas and in camps within Jordanian territory. The authors also fail to mention that the Jordanian regime supports terrorist organizations that are active in the southern regions and provides them with fighters, materiel and all forms of support, something of which we had repeatedly informed the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

It is regrettable that the Secretariat neither characterized the attack that the American army carried out on 18 May 2017 against Government forces and allied forces, which were heading towards Tanf to combat the terrorist organization ISIL, as an act of aggression and a grave violation of international law that threatens peace and security in the region, nor condemned that attack and subsequent attacks.

The Syrian Government rejects the references to militias in paragraph 5, and stresses that Syrian Government forces cooperate with allied groups that help them to combat terrorism in a lawful and legitimate manner.

The Syrian Government condemns the fact that, in paragraph 29 of the report, the Secretariat defers to the Turkish regime by continuing to describe Turkey's closure of the Nusaybin border crossing as temporary, even though it has been in place since December 2015, and by accepting Turkey's claim that the closure is for security reasons. The Erdoğan regime's true objective in closing this crossing is to increase the suffering of Syrian civilians in Hasakah governorate; meanwhile, it is helping thousands of mercenaries and foreign terrorist fighters to enter into Syria. In that regard, the Syrian Government notes that it has informed the Resident Coordinator that it consents to the reopening of the Nusaybin crossing provided that humanitarian assistance is brought through the crossing in coordination with the Syrian Government, which is represented by the Governor of Hasakah, and on condition that such assistance is distributed through the relief subcommittee in Hasakah. However, the Turkish Government still refuses to respond to United Nations requests to open the border crossing, and the United Nations has not taken any serious action, in deference to the feelings of the Turkish regime.

The Syrian Government is disappointed that, in paragraph 29, the authors of the report failed to note the actions that it has been taking to facilitate United Nations humanitarian operations in Syria and reduce operational costs, including, inter alia, the Government's decision to allow humanitarian assistance provided by the United Nations and its agencies and by the World Food Programme (WFP) to be transported from Rif Dimashq, Damascus, Homs and Aleppo governorates via the agreed upon land route to Hasakah governorate and Qamishli city. This significant action on the part of the Government demonstrates its commitment to facilitating humanitarian access and removing the obstacles that impede the work of humanitarian partners.

The authors of the report ignore the fact that donor conferences have become propaganda shows, and that States which claim to be donors have not fulfilled their pledges. Indeed, those States have delivered only 21 per cent of the amounts that they had pledged to contribute to the 2017 Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Response Plan and had announced in various media. The failure of those States to fulfil their pledges gives lie to their claims that they care for the Syrian people and are desirous of ensuring the success of United Nations efforts in Syria. It demonstrates that all they care for are their interests and that they merely aspire to fulfil their own policies.

The Syrian Government is disappointed that the authors relay a number of claims and accusations that have been levelled against it with regard to procedural and logistical matters related to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to unstable areas. It has facilitated the delivery of such assistance in every possible way, so long as the assistance is intended for Syrian civilians in need and its delivery is arranged for in accordance with the applicable Syrian laws and regulations.

The Syrian Government reiterates that it has authorized the World Health Organization (WHO) to send medical assistance, including medical devices and medicines, to Qamishli in Hasakah governorate, Mayadin in Dayr al-Zawr governorate and Duma and eastern Ghutah in Rif Dimashq governorate. The Government has also approved a number of other requests made directly by WHO to deliver assistance to specific areas by means of its convoys operating as part of the inter-agency convoys.

Contrary to the claims made in paragraph 26 of the report, the Syrian Government regularly approves the importation of medical supplies by inter-agency convoys, as well as requests submitted by United Nations organizations working in Syria.

The Syrian Government finds it deplorable that representatives of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have been remiss in making arrangements for convoys. They have focused exclusively on areas that already receive monthly assistance, and have provided inaccurate figures regarding the number of convoys per month and the number of areas that are reached, in order to diminish the efforts of the Syrian Government.

The Government stresses that OCHA figures on humanitarian assistance convoys are incorrect. Since the beginning of 2017, there have been 45 humanitarian assistance convoys. In April and May 2017 alone, there were 16 such convoys:

- Nine inter-agency convoys (United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Syrian Arab Red Crescent) were sent to the following areas: Zabadani, Madaya, Duma and surrounding towns, eastern Harasta, Mudayrah, Misraba (on 19 June), the area of Wadi Barada and surrounding towns, Jayrud, Nasiriyah, Atanah, Harbinafsih, Aqrab, Tallaf, Khirbat al-Jami',

the Hulah area, Taldu, Kafr Laha, the Dar al-Kabirah area, Ghantu, Tayr Ma'lah and Rastan and surrounding towns (vaccinations only).

- On 8 April 2017, the United Nations and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) dispatched a joint convoy to Yalda, Babila and Bayt Saham.
- ICRC, in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, dispatched six convoys to Ruhaybah, Kanakir, Damir, Kafr Zayta, Qal'at al-Madiq, Afrin and Tall Rif'at.

The Syrian Government stresses that the authors of the report and United Nations agencies operating in Syria must address the question of delivery of humanitarian aid in a precise and unbiased manner. We note that certain United Nations agencies are exaggerating needs in certain areas and requesting delivery of vast quantities of aid that are greatly out of line with the number of beneficiaries and their needs. Meanwhile, those same agencies deliver little or no assistance at all to other areas. Such conduct has, in several cases, led to waste of effort and funds, and allowed the goods being delivered to spoil and exceed their expiration date.

The Syrian Government is disappointed that the authors of the report would deliberately use any part thereof to convey negative messages about the Government and level false accusations against it. For example, in paragraph 28, the authors state that the Government did not respond to or failed to approve three requests from WFP, overlooking the fact that the Government had approved the vast majority of the requests that WFP had made, which number 1,792 according to the report.

The Syrian Government stresses that the United Nations must conduct humanitarian work in full cooperation with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. It must not pay heed or bow to the demands of other actors, such as the "local authorities" that the authors mention.

In keeping with its concern for Syrian citizens throughout the country and its efforts to alleviate their suffering and help them overcome the current crisis, the Syrian Government has taken all necessary measures to allow students who reside in areas where armed terrorist groups are present to leave those areas in order to take their school examinations. To that end, the Government has established special testing centres that have everything that students might need, including school supplies, teachers, food and drink. Paragraph 35 not only fails to mention those efforts, but also fails to acknowledge that the efforts of UNRWA and the United Nations Children's Fund would not have succeeded had it not been for the support and assistance that the Syrian Government has provided and the relevant measures that it has taken. At the same time, the Government has continued working to evacuate the injured, the sick and the aged from those areas and provide them with free health care. The failure to mention what the Syrian Government has done and is doing demonstrates the extent to which its efforts are being denied and just how severely it is being targeted and maligned.

The Syrian Government finds it deplorable that the Secretariat has once again failed to mention the economic, social, humanitarian, and medical suffering borne by the Syrian people as a result of the ongoing unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by the United States of America, the European Union and other States against such sectors as health, electricity, energy, trade, finance and transfer of funds, which are vital to the survival of the Syrian people and relief operations. The Government stresses that by continuing to ignore this fundamental issue, the authors of the report will have to bear the responsibility of covering up the actions of States that violate the Charter of the United Nations and the Organization's

relevant resolutions by imposing the above-mentioned measures. We remind you that monitoring the effects of such measures on the standard of living in and the prosperity of targeted States is one of the obligations imposed on the United Nations by the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The Government is surprised that the authors continue to include incorrect information in the reports. It therefore reaffirms that it has granted approval for 26 international non-governmental organizations (not 21, as stated in the report) to carry out humanitarian and relief work in Syria. Those organizations are given the assistance they need to carry out their work in accordance with the legislation and laws in force in the Syrian Arab Republic. In May, the Syrian Government approved 26 applications for entry visas to Syria (not 13, as stated in the report) and 64 applications for renewal of residence (not 36, as stated in the report). The Syrian Government also granted hundreds of entry visas to employees of the ICRC and other international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Syrian Government rejects the Secretariat's continual promotion of cross-border assistance, and reiterates that such assistance is ineffective, given that most of it falls into the hands of armed terrorist groups deployed in the targeted areas. The notifications sent to the Government do not meet the minimum standard of credibility with regard to figures, data, number of beneficiaries and information on the parties that receive and distribute assistance to civilian beneficiaries.

The Syrian Government reiterates that the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic cannot carry out its duty, as it is not capable, to date, of verifying that cross-border assistance is reaching its rightful beneficiaries. We remind you that the Bab al-Hawa, Bab al-Salamah and Ramtha crossings are also entry points for arms, materiel and ammunition being smuggled to armed terrorist groups in Syria. The Government strongly rejects the authors' continued bias in favour of Turkey and Jordan when discussing the delivery of cross-border assistance. It reiterates that the Syrian Arab Red Crescent stands ready to monitor the delivery of humanitarian assistance to its intended recipients, but the Secretariat has in the past rejected that proposal.

The Syrian Government reiterates its stated position regarding the International Criminal Court and the calls that have been made to refer the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to that Court, and stresses that the Court is not competent to address the situation in Syria. Moreover, the Court has lost all credibility and has been transformed into a political tool that is used by certain parties to attack specific States for sordid political ends that have nothing to do with the requirements of justice. The Government also reiterates the substance of the letter that it sent to the Secretary-General (A/71/799) regarding the serious legal flaws in the resolution concerning the establishment of an International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

The Syrian Government regrets that the report does not call for action that would help to improve the situation in Syria, in particular the humanitarian situation. The Secretariat should frankly and clearly call on the regimes of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and other countries to refrain from supporting terrorism in Syria, frankly call on the European Union, the United States of America and other States to lift the unilateral coercive economic measures imposed on Syria and call for those regimes that support terrorism and seek to undermine the foundations of a political solution, prolong the crisis and drain Syria to be held accountable for their actions.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its long-standing position that the crisis in Syria requires a political solution based on intra-Syrian dialogue under Syrian leadership without foreign intervention and without preconditions. It reminds the Secretariat that the success of the political process and any significant improvement in the humanitarian situation will depend, above all, on creating a climate conducive to a serious and non-politicized international and regional commitment to fighting terrorism and on an immediate end to the unilateral coercive economic measures being imposed on the Syrian people. The Syrian Government has played a constructive role in the success of the Astana and Geneva meetings.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Security Council to prevail on the States that support and finance armed terrorist groups to refrain from so doing, in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism and the financing thereof, in particular resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). Compliance with and enforcement of those resolutions is the key to resolving the situation in Syria and delivering unprecedented humanitarian assistance to those in need.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Louay **Falouh**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2017/547

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 June 2017

Original: English

Russian Federation and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Noting with concern that the situation in the Middle East is tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) of 8 June 2017 (S/2017/486) and also reaffirming its resolution 1308 (2000) of 17 July 2000,

Stressing that both parties must abide by the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and scrupulously observe the ceasefire,

Concurring with the Secretary-General's findings that the ongoing military activities conducted by any actor in the area of separation continue to have the potential to escalate tensions between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, jeopardize the ceasefire between the two countries, and pose a risk to the local civilian population and United Nations personnel on the ground,

Expressing grave concern at all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement,

Stressing that there should be no military forces in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF,

Strongly condemning the continued fighting in the area of separation, *calling* on all parties to the Syrian domestic conflict to cease military actions in the UNDOF area of operations and to respect international humanitarian law,

Condemning the use of heavy weapons by both the Syrian armed forces and armed groups in the ongoing Syrian conflict in the area of separation, including the use of tanks by the Syrian armed forces and opposition during clashes,

Echoing the Secretary-General's call upon all parties to the Syrian domestic conflict to cease military actions throughout the country, including in the UNDOF area of operations,

Reaffirming its readiness to consider listing individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities providing support to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) or to the Al-Nusra Front, including those who are financing, arming, planning, or recruiting for ISIL or the Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities associated with ISIL and Al-Qaida as

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listed on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List, including those participating in or otherwise supporting attacks against UNDOF peacekeepers,

Recognizing the necessity of efforts to flexibly adjust UNDOF's posture on a temporary basis to minimize the security risk to UNDOF personnel as UNDOF continues to implement its mandate, while emphasizing that the ultimate goal is for the peacekeepers to return to their positions in UNDOF's area of operations as soon as practicable,

Emphasizing the importance of Security Council and troop-contributing countries having access to reports and information related to UNDOF's current temporary configuration, and reinforcing that such information assists the Security Council with evaluating, mandating, and reviewing UNDOF and with effective consultation with troop-contributing countries,

Underscoring the need for UNDOF to have at its disposal all necessary means and resources to carry out its mandate safely and securely, including technology and equipment to enhance its observation of the area of separation and the ceasefire line, and to improve force protection, as appropriate, and *recalling* that the theft of United Nations weapons and ammunition, vehicles and other assets, and the looting and destruction of United Nations facilities, are unacceptable,

Expressing its profound appreciation to UNDOF's military and civilian personnel, including those from Observer Group Golan, for their service in an increasingly challenging operating environment, *underscoring* the important contribution UNDOF's continued presence makes to peace and security in the Middle East, *welcoming* steps taken to enhance the safety and security of UNDOF, including Observer Group Golan, personnel, and *stressing* the need for continued vigilance to ensure the safety and security of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan personnel,

Strongly condemning incidents threatening the safety and security of United Nations personnel,

Expressing its appreciation to UNDOF, including Observer Group Golan, for the efforts made to upgrade and expand its positions on Mount Hermon, including the establishment of new positions,

Taking note of the Secretary-General's plan for UNDOF to return to vacated positions, starting with Camp Faouar on the Bravo side, based on a continuous assessment of security in the area of separation and its surroundings, and continued discussion and coordination with the parties,

Recalls that UNDOF's deployment and the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement are steps toward a just and durable peace on the basis of Security Council Resolution 338 (1973),

1. *Calls upon* the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

2. *Stresses* the obligation on both parties to scrupulously and fully respect the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement, *calls on* the parties to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation, *encourages* the parties to take advantage of UNDOF's liaison function regularly to address issues of mutual concern, as appropriate, and *underscores* that there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation, including military operations by the Syrian Arab Armed Forces;

3. *Underlines* that there should be no military activity of the armed opposition groups in the area of separation, and *urges* Member States to convey

strongly to the Syrian armed opposition groups in UNDOF's area of operations to halt all activities that endanger United Nations peacekeepers on the ground and to accord the United Nations personnel on the ground the freedom to carry out their mandate safely and securely;

4. *Calls on* all groups other than UNDOF to abandon all UNDOF positions and the Quneitra crossing point, and return the peacekeepers' vehicles, weapons, and other equipment;

5. *Calls on* all parties to cooperate fully with the operations of UNDOF, to respect its privileges and immunities and to ensure its freedom of movement, as well as the security of and unhindered and immediate access for the United Nations personnel carrying out their mandate, including the unimpeded delivery of UNDOF equipment and the temporary use of alternative ports of entry and departure, as required, to ensure safe and secure troop rotation and resupply activities, in conformity with existing agreements, and urges prompt reporting by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and troop-contributing countries of any actions that impede UNDOF's ability to fulfil its mandate;

6. *Commends* the establishment of a new temporary crossing point for UNDOF personnel between the Alpha and Bravo sides for contingency situations, in the absence of the established crossing at Quneitra, and in this regard, *calls on* the parties to constructively engage with UNDOF, with the understanding that the Quneitra crossing will be re-opened as soon as security conditions permit;

7. *Welcomes* the return of an initial UNDOF contingent to Camp Faouar, as well as the cooperation of the parties to facilitate this return, together with continued efforts to plan for UNDOF's expeditious return to vacated positions in the area of separation, including the provision of adequate force protection, based on a continuous assessment of security in the area;

8. *Underscores* the importance of deploying appropriate technology, including counter-improvised explosive device (IED) capabilities and a sense and warn system, to ensure the safety and security of UNDOF personnel and equipment, following appropriate consultations with the parties, and *urges* the Secretary-General to accelerate the development of proposals for such technologies;

9. *Encourages* the parties to the Disengagement Agreement to engage constructively to make the necessary temporary arrangements with UNDOF for the force's return to vacated positions, taking into account existing agreements;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts being undertaken by UNDOF to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take preventive and disciplinary action to ensure that such acts are properly investigated and punished in cases involving their personnel;

11. *Decides* to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a period of six months, that is, until 31 December 2017, and *requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that UNDOF has the required capacity and resources to fulfil the mandate in a safe and secure way;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973).

United Nations S/2017/548

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 June 2017

Original: English

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling the arms embargo, travel ban, assets freeze and measures concerning illicit oil exports which were imposed and modified by resolutions 1970 (2011), 1973 (2011), 2009 (2011), 2040 (2012), 2095 (2013), 2144 (2014), 2146 (2014), 2174 (2014), 2213 (2015), 2278 (2016), 2292 (2016), and 2357 (2017) (the Measures), and that the mandate of the Panel of Experts established by paragraph 24 of resolution 1973 (2011) and modified by resolutions 2040 (2012), 2146 (2014), 2174 (2014), and 2213 (2015) was extended until 31 July 2017 by resolution 2278 (2016),

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya,

Recalling resolution 2259 (2015) which welcomed the signing of the 17 December 2015 Libyan Political Agreement of Skhirat, Morocco and endorsed the Rome Communiqué of 13 December 2015 to support the Government of National Accord as the sole legitimate government of Libya, that should be based in Tripoli, and *further expressing* its determination in this regard to support the Government of National Accord,

Welcoming the meeting of the Libyan Political Dialogue on 10 March 2016, which reaffirmed its commitment to uphold the Libyan Political Agreement *further welcoming* recent efforts to strengthen dialogue between Libyans, supported by Libya's neighbours and regional organizations, *noting* the importance of the United Nations-facilitated, Libyan-led process to advance inclusive political dialogue,

Underlining the primary responsibility of the Government of National Accord in taking appropriate action to prevent the illicit export of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, from Libya and *reaffirming* the importance of international support for Libyan sovereignty over its territory and resources,

Expressing its concern that the illicit export of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, from Libya undermines the Government of National Accord and poses a threat to the peace, security and stability of Libya,

Expressing support for Libyan efforts to resolve peacefully the disruptions of Libya's energy exports and *reiterating* that control of all facilities should be transferred back to the proper authorities,

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Further reiterating its concern about activities which could damage the integrity and unity of Libyan State financial institutions and the National Oil Corporation, *highlighting* the importance of these institutions continuing to function for the benefit of all Libyans, and *stressing* the need for the Government of National Accord to exercise sole and effective oversight over the National Oil Corporation, the Central Bank of Libya, and the Libyan Investment Authority as a matter of urgency, without prejudice to future constitutional arrangements pursuant to the Libyan Political Agreement,

Further recalling resolution 2259 (2015) which called on Member States to cease support to and official contact with parallel institutions claiming to be the legitimate authority, but which were outside the Libyan Political Agreement, as specified by it,

Recalling that international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, sets out the legal framework applicable to activities in the oceans and seas,

Further recalling resolution 2292 (2016) and resolution 2357 (2017) which in relation to the implementation of the arms embargo authorise, for the period of time specified by those resolutions, the inspection on the high seas off the coast of Libya of vessels bound to or from Libya believed to be carrying arms or related materiel in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions, and the seizure and disposal of such items provided that Member States make good faith efforts to first obtain the consent of the vessel's flag State prior to any inspections while acting in accordance with those resolutions,

Reaffirming the importance of holding accountable those responsible for violations or abuses of human rights or violations of international humanitarian law, including those involved in attacks targeting civilians and *stressing* the need to transfer detainees to State authority,

Reiterating its expression of support for the Government of National Accord, as stated in paragraph 3 of resolution 2259 (2015), and *noting* in this regard the specific requests made to the Government of National Accord in this resolution,

Reiterating its request that all Member States fully support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and work with the Libyan authorities and United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to develop a coordinated package of support to build the capacity of the Government of National Accord, in line with Libyan priorities and in response to requests for assistance,

Determining that the situation in Libya continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

Prevention of Illicit Exports of Petroleum, including Crude Oil and Refined Petroleum Products

1. *Condemns* attempts to illicitly export petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, from Libya, including by parallel institutions which are not acting under the authority of the Government of National Accord;

2. *Decides* to extend until 15 November 2018 the authorizations provided by and the measures imposed by resolution 2146 (2014), and *decides further* that the authorisations provided by and the measures imposed by that resolution shall apply with respect to vessels loading, transporting, or discharging petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, illicitly exported or attempted to be exported from Libya;

3. *Welcomes* the appointment by the Government of National Accord and notification to the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011) (the Committee) of a focal point responsible for communication with the Committee with respect to the measures in resolution 2146 (2014), *requests* the focal point to continue to inform the Committee of any vessels transporting petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, illicitly exported from Libya, and *urges* the Government of National Accord to provide regular updates to inform the Committee on ports, oil fields, and installations that are under its control, and to inform the Committee about the mechanism used to certify legal exports of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products;

4. *Calls* on the Government of National Accord, on the basis of any information regarding such exports or attempted exports, to expeditiously contact the concerned vessel's flag State, in the first instance, to resolve the issue and *directs* the Committee to immediately inform all relevant Member States about notifications to the Committee from the Government of National Accord's focal point regarding vessels transporting petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, illicitly exported from Libya;

Effective Oversight of the Financial Institutions

5. *Requests* that the Government of National Accord confirm to the Committee as soon as it exercises sole and effective oversight over the National Oil Corporation, the Central Bank of Libya, and the Libyan Investment Authority;

Arms Embargo

6. *Welcomes* the appointment by the Government of National Accord of a focal point pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2278, *takes note* of the briefing provided by the focal point to the Committee on the structure of the security forces under its control, the infrastructure in place to ensure the safe storage, registration, maintenance and distribution of military equipment by the Government security forces, and training needs, *continues* to emphasise the importance of the Government of National Accord exercising control over and safely storing arms, with the support of the international community, and *stresses* that ensuring security and defending Libya from terrorism must be the task of unified and strengthened national security forces under the sole authority of the Government of National Accord within the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement;

7. *Affirms* that the Government of National Accord may submit requests under paragraph 8 of resolution 2174 (2014) for the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel, including related ammunition and spare parts, for the use by security forces under its control to combat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), groups that have pledged allegiance to ISIL, Ansar Al Sharia, and other groups associated with Al-Qaida operating in Libya, *calls* upon the Committee to consider expeditiously such requests, and *affirms* the Security Council's readiness to consider reviewing the arms embargo, when appropriate;

8. *Urges* Member States to assist the Government of National Accord, upon its request, by providing it with the necessary security and capacity-building assistance, in response to threats to Libyan security and in defeating ISIL, groups that have pledged allegiance to ISIL, Ansar Al Sharia, and other groups associated with Al-Qaida operating in Libya;

9. *Urges* the Government of National Accord to improve further the monitoring and control of arms or related materiel that are supplied, sold or transferred to Libya in accordance with paragraph 9 (c) of resolution 1970 (2011) or paragraph 8 of resolution 2174 (2014), including through the use of end user

certificates issued by the Government of National Accord, *requests* the Panel of Experts established by paragraph 24 of resolution 1973 (2011) to consult with the Government of National Accord about the safeguards needed to safely procure and secure arms and related materiel, and *urges* Member States and regional organizations to provide assistance to the Government of National Accord upon its request to strengthen the infrastructure and mechanisms currently in place to do so;

10. *Calls upon* the Government of National Accord to improve the implementation of the arms embargo, including at all entry points, as soon as it exercises oversight, and *calls* upon all Member States to cooperate in such efforts;

Travel Ban and Asset Freeze

11. *Reaffirms* that the travel ban and asset freeze measures specified in paragraphs 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 21 of resolution 1970 (2011), as modified by paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 of resolution 2009 (2011) and paragraph 11 of resolution 2213 (2015), apply to individuals and entities designated under that resolution and under resolution 1973 (2011) and by the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011), and *reaffirms* that these measures also apply to individuals and entities determined by the Committee to be engaging in or providing support for other acts that threaten the peace, stability or security of Libya, or obstruct or undermine the successful completion of its political transition, and *decides* that, in addition to the acts listed in paragraph 11 (a)-(f) of resolution 2213 (2015), such acts may also include but are not limited to planning, directing, sponsoring, or participating in attacks against United Nations personnel, including members of the Panel of Experts established by paragraph 24 of resolution 1973 (2011) and modified by resolutions 2040 (2012), 2146 (2014), 2174 (2014), 2213 (2015) and this resolution (the Panel);

12. *Reaffirms* its intention to ensure that assets frozen pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall at a later stage be made available to and for the benefit of the Libyan people and taking note of the letter circulated as document S/2016/275, *affirms* the Security Council's readiness to consider changes, when appropriate, to the asset freeze at the request of the Government of National Accord;

Panel of Experts

13. *Decides* to extend until 15 November 2018 the mandate of the Panel of Experts (the Panel), established by paragraph 24 of resolution 1973 (2011) and modified by resolutions 2040 (2012), 2146 (2014), 2174 (2014), and 2213 (2015) and *decides* that the Panel's mandated tasks shall remain as defined in resolution 2213 (2015) and shall also apply with respect to the Measures updated in this resolution;

14. *Decides* that the Panel shall provide to the Council an interim report on its work no later than 28 February 2018, and a final report to the Council, after discussion with the Committee, no later than 15 September 2018 with its findings and recommendations;

15. *Urges* all States, relevant United Nations bodies, including UNSMIL, and other interested parties, to cooperate fully with the Committee and the Panel, in particular by supplying any information at their disposal on the implementation of the Measures decided in resolutions 1970 (2011), 1973 (2011), 2146 (2014) and 2174 (2014), and modified in resolutions 2009 (2011), 2040 (2012), 2095 (2013), 2144 (2014), 2213 (2015), 2278 (2016), 2292 (2016), 2357 (2017) and in this resolution, in particular incidents of non-compliance, and *calls* on UNSMIL and the Government of National Accord to support Panel investigatory work inside Libya,

including by sharing information, facilitating transit and granting access to weapons storage facilities, as appropriate;

16. *Calls* upon all parties and all States to ensure the safety of the Panel's members, and further *calls* upon all parties and all States, including Libya and countries of the region, to provide unhindered and immediate access, in particular to persons, documents and sites the Panel deems relevant to the execution of its mandate;

17. *Affirms* its readiness to review the appropriateness of the Measures contained in this resolution, including the strengthening, modification, suspension or lifting of the Measures, and its readiness to review the mandate of UNSMIL and the Panel, as may be needed at any time in light of developments in Libya;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2017/549

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 June 2017

Original: English

Twelfth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1956 (2010)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1956 (2010), in which the Council requested me to provide written reports to the Council every six months about the United Nations Compensation Fund, with effect from 1 January 2012, evaluating the continued compliance with the provisions of paragraph 21 of resolution 1483 (2003), which requires Iraq to deposit 5 per cent of the proceeds from export sales of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas into the Fund. The present twelfth report covers the developments following the issuance of my eleventh report (S/2016/1120) on 28 December 2016.

II. Developments

2. The overall amount of compensation paid to date by the United Nations Compensation Commission stands at $47.8 billion, leaving approximately $4.6 billion outstanding to be paid to Kuwait to settle the last remaining claim.

3. As indicated in my previous report, owing to the extraordinarily difficult security circumstances in Iraq and the unusual budgetary challenges associated therewith that had continued since the adoption of its decisions 272 (2014) and 273 (2015), the Governing Council of the Commission adopted decision 274 (2016), by which it postponed until 1 January 2018 the deposit requirements of Iraq under Security Council resolution 1483 (2003). As a result of those decisions, no compensation payments towards the outstanding claim have been made since October 2014. In the light of the postponements, the Governing Council has been considering future options to ensure the payment of the outstanding amount in a timely manner.

4. At the eighty-second session of the Governing Council, held on 24 April 2017, the Council continued its discussion of future options and welcomed the confirmation by the delegations of Iraq and Kuwait that they would hold bilateral meetings to collaborate on options and report to the Council thereon. The first meeting was held in Geneva from 15 to 17 May 2017, and the next meeting was expected to be held in June or July 2017. The matter will be further considered by the Governing Council at its eighty-third session, which has been tentatively scheduled to be held on 2 and 3 October 2017.

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5. In conclusion, I welcome the bilateral meetings between Iraq and Kuwait and encourage the delegations of those countries to jointly develop options for the consideration of the Governing Council that would ensure the timely completion of the Commission's mandate. I reiterate my expression of solidarity with the Government and the people of Iraq.

United Nations S/2017/550

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 July 2017

Original: English

Identical letters dated 27 June 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

With regard to the implementation of the humanitarian convoy plan to unstable areas, from April to July 2017, and in order to clarify the facts and to indicate the inaccuracy of the information provided by some United Nations agencies operating in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to clarify the following regarding assistance convoys deployed since the beginning of 2017.

- According to statistics prepared by national partners, 45 aid convoys were deployed to the following areas:

  Mu'addamiyah (7 January 2017), eastern Mu'addamiyah (8 January), Tall (11 January), Dumayr (25 January), Talbisah and Rastan (5 February), Afrin (13 February), Ruhaybah (15 February), Dumayr (2 March), Rawdah and Zabadani (6 March), Duma and surrounding towns (9 March), Sanamayn and Dayr al-Bukht and Mutaybin (14 March), Fu'ah and Kafraya (14 March), Madaya and Zabadani (14 March), Wadi Barada (24 March), Talbisah (28 March), Bludan (28 March), Rastan (30 March), Khan al-Shih (30 March), Yalda and Babila and Bayt Saham (8 April), Hulah (13 April), Harbinafsih and Aqarib and Tallaf and Khirbat al-Jami' (13 April), Tall Rif'at and Raju and Afrin and Kafr Jannah and Yakhur (14 April), Madaya and Buqayn (19 April), Dar al-Kabirah and Ghantu and Tayr Ma'lah (20 April), Yarmouk Camp (23 April), Duma and surrounding towns (2 May), Wadi Barada, Barhala, Kafr al-Awamid, Suq Wadi Barada, Afrah, Dayr Muqrin, Dayr Qanun, Ayn al-Fijah, Hasaniyah, and Kufayr al-Zayt (6 May), Kanakir (10 May) Qabun (16 May), Dumayr (20 May), Rastan (22 May), Jayrud, Nasiriyah and Atanah (22 May), Hulah (23 May), Dar al-Kabirah and Ghantu and Tayr Ma'lah (24 May), Qal'at al-Madiq (25 May), Kafr Zayta (25 May), Ruhaybah (3 June), Tall Rif'at and Raju and Afrin and Kafr Jannah and Yakhur (5 June), Barzah (9 June), Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr (15 June), eastern Harasta (19 June), Qabun (20 June), Rastan and surrounding areas (22 June).

We would like to mention that the convoy deployed to Wa'r on 2 February was not delivered owing to the security situation in the area. In addition, on 19 June, a convoy to eastern Harasta was attacked by members of terrorist organizations and one of the drivers was injured by a sniper.

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- In implementing the plan for April and May, 16 convoys were deployed as follows:

  – Nine joint assistance convoys (United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross and Syrian Arab Red Crescent) were dispatched to Zabadani and Madaya, Duma and surrounding towns, eastern Harasta, Mudayra and Misraba (carried out on 19 Jun), Wadi Barada and its vicinity, Jayrud, Nasiriyah, Atanah, Harbinafsih, Aqarib, Tallaf, Khirbat al-Jami', Hulah, Taldu, Kafr Laha, Dar al-Kabirah, Ghantu, Tayr Ma'lah, Rastan and surrounding towns (vaccines only).

  – A joint United Nations-United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East convoy was dispatched to Yalda and Babila and Bayt Saham on 8 April.

  – Six Red Cross convoys were deployed to Ruhaybah, Kanakir, Dumayr, Kafr Zayta, Qal'at al-Madiq, Afrin and Tall Rif'at.

- In implementing the plan for June and July, as at 27 June 2017, four joint United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross and Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoys were dispatched as follows:

  – An assistance convoy was dispatched to Barzah on 9 June, and another to Qabun on 20 June by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Convoys were also dispatched to Talbisah and the 6 towns connected to it on 15 June, the Tulul al-Humr area and the 14 towns connected to it on 15 June, and Rastan and the 9 towns connected to it on 22 June.

Over the past few months, the delivery of air aid to Dayr al-Zawr has continued with the full support of and facilitation by the Syrian Government. More than 6,345 tons of food has been sent by partners, in addition to medicine, medical supplies and other materials.

The monthly reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Security Council resolutions relating to the humanitarian situation continue to ignore mentioning the convoys deployed by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, which leads to the provision of false and incorrect figures on the reality of the implementation of the convoy plans and the number of persons in need. The authors of these reports, in particular representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, also ignore the difficulties caused by the security situation, the practices of terrorist organizations and some logistical difficulties, including the small number of trucks and the lack of fuel in some provinces, especially in winter, which all prevent the full implementation of convoy plans.

It is important to note that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs did not deploy convoys into many areas that are in great need of assistance and support. Meanwhile, the Office is deliberately focusing on specific areas where armed terrorist groups exist and operate and neglecting areas where these terrorist groups are not present.

On 6 June 2017, the Syrian Government informed the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Syria and the Director of the World Food Programme office of its approval of the request to transfer humanitarian assistance by land from Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Homs and Aleppo to Hasakah and Qamishli.

The Syrian Government made it clear that this approval would allow the United Nations and its specialized agencies to use the agreed land route to ensure more assistance delivery and reduce air transport cost. The United Nations agencies and the World Food Programme started by operating small convoys (of three trucks)

as an experimental phase, to explore the road and the security and safety conditions. The number of convoys and trucks have since gradually increased.

The so-called "international donors conferences" have become mere propagandist and promotion shows for some Governments, where only 21 per cent of the pledges have been fulfilled, which proves that some of these Governments are only interested in imposing dangerous policies and agendas that exploit the human suffering of the Syrian people.

I should be grateful if the present letter were issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Louay **Falouh**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Letter dated 23 June 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and to transmit a letter dated 14 June 2017 from Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, attaching the communiqué of the 691st meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council, held on 12 June 2017 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

Letter dated 14 June 2017 from the Chairperson of the African Union Commission addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you to share with you the communiqué of the 691st meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (see S/2017/531, annex), regarding our joint efforts in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), for transmission to the United Nations Security Council. As you will recall, Security Council resolution 2296 (2016) and your letter of 28 October 2016 to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/915) requested that a joint African Union-United Nations strategic review of UNAMID should be undertaken, in close consultation with the Government of the Sudan, to provide detailed recommendations to the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council on the Mission's priorities, its configuration and, if necessary, propose a further revision of the benchmarks to reflect the realities in Darfur.

As you are aware, the joint African Union-United Nations strategic review mission was subsequently undertaken from 5 to 17 March 2017, by officials from both the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat. The strategic review mission reported that the security situation in Darfur had improved. In this light, it reported on the current fighting trends between the Government of the Sudan and armed groups and their impact on security. It also reported on the militia groups and proliferation of weapons in Darfur while at the same time elaborating on the ongoing intercommunal violence. The joint report also proposed the reconfiguration of UNAMID in order to refocus the Mission's mandate.

Subsequent to our publishing of the report and its recommendations, the Peace and Security Council met on 12 June 2017 to consider our joint strategic review report. To that end, Council concurred with our report that there was improvement on the general security situation in Darfur. However, given the fact that there are still concerns over the security and humanitarian situations on the ground, Council decided that the mission should maintain its mandate of protecting civilians, assisting humanitarian delivery and mediating between the Government of the Sudan and armed movements.

Given the foregoing, I wish to forward to you, herewith attached, the joint review report and the communiqué of the 691st meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 12 June 2017, by which the Peace and Security Council adopted our joint review report on UNAMID and renewed the UNAMID mandate for one (1) year. As you will note, Council also requested the Security Council to renew the mandate of UNAMID by one (1) year. Consequently, I am looking forward to receiving a positive report on the United Nations Security Council resolution on this matter.

(*Signed*) Moussa **Faki Mahamat**